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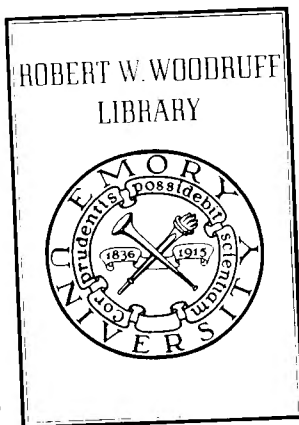
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[Shortly.]



"There, in the doorway, pale as a lily, but as lustrous and as beautiful,
stood Bertha Jobson."

Page 73, Book I

THE UNICORN SERIES.

JOBSON'S ENEMIES.

BY
EDWARD JENKINS,
Author of "Gin's Baby," &c., &c.

Stereotyped



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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE	CHAPTER	PAGE
I. Fons et Origo	1	XIX. Repentance and Res- titution	165
II. Master Jobson's Aunt	13	XX. First and Second Mortgages	173
III. Lady Pilkington	23	XXI. Excursions—Alarums	179
IV. Driblets	37	XXII. Master Skirrow	189
V. The Governor's Ball	43	XXIII. A Provincial Election	198
VI. An Indiscreet Young Gentlemen	53	XXIV. David Roger	208
VII. The Picnic	57	XXV. The Unchaining of Hope	217
VIII. The Shadow of Death.	64	XXVI. Life becomes Serious	227
IX. A Startling Appari- tion	70	XXVII. Roger on Parsons	240
X. The Doctor shows signs of Insanity	75	XXVIII. Marian Jobson to Lady Pilkington	252
XI. Good-bye	80	XXIX. An Old Story	259
XII. Fresh Scenes and Familiar Faces	83	XXX. "Nescius Auræ Fal- laci!"	274
XIII. The Major turns up	91	XXXI. The Cynicism of Dis- appointment	284
XIV. The Tap-room of the Cornwall Arms.	104	XXXII. In the Temple	285
XV. Marian Jobson to Lady Pilkington	119	XXXIII. Vis Major Contra Vires Minores	293
XVI. Taddy goes to School	126	XXXIV. The Wolf and the Lamb	304
XVII. Strange Doings in Cornwall	138	XXXV. General Jobson's Quarters	316
XVIII. Judge Lynch on the Rampage	154		

CHAPTER	PAGE	CHAPTER	PAGE
XXXVI. Notes from Paris and a Disagreeable Sur- prise	321	LIV. Miss Raymond (still speaking)	483
XXXVII. A Wound from a Friendly Hand	332	LV. An Episcopal Thun- derbolt	493
XXXVIII. A Strange Client	339	LVI. Jobson's Mother-in- law	502
XXXIX. Bopp's	347	LVII. The Father and the Bishop	506
XL. An Avowal	367	LVIII. The Air Thickens	514
XLI. Diamond cut Dia- mond	371	LIX. A Cyclone	520
XLII. A Proposal	387	LX. A Facer	532
XLIII. A Heavenly Platonic	393	LXI. Appeal to Moses.	541
XLIV. The Cut Direct	401	LXII. A Good deal about Moses	550
XLV. A Slap in the Face	409	LXIII. Summum Jus Summa Injuria	559
XLVI. The General Prac- tices Economy	416	LXIV. The Dean and Bertha as Diplomats	571
XLVII. Home	429	LXV. The Amenities of Political Journalism	584
XLVIII. Miss Jobson is Offended.	438	LXVI. Natural Selection—in Politics	592
XLIX. A Model Sunday	442	LXVII. The Improprieties of Innocence	602
L. The Difficulties of Candour	452	LXVIII. A Fine Point in Casuistry	611
LI. Miss Raymond	460	LXIX. The Crisis	617
LII. Miss Raymond's Story (continued)	471		
LIII. Miss Raymond's Story (continued)	473		



CHAPTER I.

FONS ET ORIGO.

IT was the twenty-seventh day of June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty, when Jobson went down.

All his enemies, his dearest friends and the wife of his bosom said that "he had gone up like a rocket and come down like a stick;" a figure indicating that Jobson had made some noise in the world and no little exhibition of brightness; and that in the opinion of those persons all that had completely gone off and gone out.

Job was the natural father of all the Jobsons. He is said to have said that man was *born to trouble as the sparks fly upward*. Evidently he foresaw the fate of Jobson. In that celebrated apophthegm he accurately summed up the incidents of a rocket success. To shoot into high life whizzing and sparkling amidst the cheers of spectators; to end in a report, a coruscation, an empty case and a tumbling lath. This is Job's metaphor to a T.

Such a life ought to be worth writing, must be worth reading, cannot but be worth pondering. Poor Alexander the Great went up and came down something in this fashion; so did Napoleon the First; so did his nephew, the third Napoleon; Hudson, Mr. Roupell and Baron Strousberg shared this sort of destiny with Charles the Twelfth and Mr. Benson.

Such lives are, of necessity, full of incident. And all the world would like to know of any such human rocket how it was originally compounded; of what elements, com-

bustive and explosive—fame and success being after all mere combustion and explosion ; and whether the said rocket developed effects of “sweetness and light” so overwhelming that all the world, including its chief prophet and high priest (in his own estimation)—I mean the inventor of this latter phrase—staring upwards with dazzled eyes and bewildered brains, were unable to withhold the tribute of an admiring “O!”

Such a firework was our subject ; and his invention, composition, loading, priming and all other particulars, shall here be faithfully set down for instruction, warning, or amusement, as the case may be.

Jobson’s outer shell, in its uncharged condition, was first exhibited to the world at Barbadoes. But stay !—before history, proof. Some one—a critic—will deny that Jobson ever existed—will affirm that these memoirs are “parabohical,” “hypothetical,” “mythical,” “allegorical,” “incredible,” “impossible,”—heaven knows what other epithets carping objectors may apply to them ! Very well, we, the author, will be even with these croakers. We will forestall them. This is a case of proof before letters, as the engravers say.

That Jobson existed is put beyond all doubt by one simple fact. Not by general rumour. That only proves that one fool has believed another. Not by the testimony of a father and mother. That leaves room for collusion, and we have no Queen’s proctor to intervene in these cases. There is a fact far more assuring—to wit the number and activity of Jobson’s enemies.

As a rule, the hatred of men directs itself against concrete things. Only a few rare and highly spiritual philosophers, like Mr. W. R. Greg or Mr. Herbert Spencer, can get up a healthy rage against ideal or unreal objects. Men—and, we may add, women—can, and often do, contract a passionate and refined devotion for unrealities : but when men or women are found venting, pursuing, nursing a violent enmity against a thing with a name, you may be certain it lives and has a being. Now in 1850 you could hardly have gone into any society without finding people (of both sexes) who hated something they called Jobson—expressed a profound

antipathy to Jobson and to his ideas. For he had ideas, and they were criticized. Some people have ideas, to which they give expression too, but which are not criticized. Whether that is the fault of the world or the people, let the parties settle between them ; but, in the main, ideas which are not criticized are not worth criticism. Every deep, true thing is sure to be discussed. I say then that Jobson had ideas, and they were somewhat keenly analyzed, dissected and fought over. He had manners and customs which were scanned and reported on like samples of cotton or tea. He had a countenance, extremely open to criticism, for it was a large one, and it was the subject of keen animadversion. He wore clothes and they were exposed to almost microscopic examination, often with indifferent results to the public benefit. And everywhere persons were to be found to whom Jobson's ideas, Jobson's manners, Jobson's customs, features, aspect, dress, were objects of scorn or detestation. Evidently, then, Jobson existed. He could not possibly have played the part of an "angel unawares." He was visible, audible, palpable. Otherwise, no one would have taken the trouble to hate him.

It will therefore be understood that nothing, however incredible, hereafter said or written of our hero, can shake the great, indisputable fact : **JOBSON WAS !** Thus we start with an advantage over every other writer of similar histories. In their case there is nothing to vindicate from incredibility the incidents they relate ; but our book bears its proof on its title-page. It is the history of the action of Jobson's Enemies.

Our hero, it may already have been guessed, was a man of the world in more senses than one. His enemies were not only those of his own household, though in regard to that, as will be seen, he shared the common fate of Christians. In this he may be said to have been fortunate. The enmity being distributed, was less concentrated and less baneful. It had not only—

*Those several spurs of neighbourhood,
Church fellow-membership and blood :*

of which the bitter Tory satirist sang. You would have found enemies of Jobson, not merely in Marylebone, but

in Southwark, or Westminster, or the Tower Hamlets ; not only in Middlesex, but in Durham or Cornwall. You would have met them rowing on the Lakes of Killarney, or staging it through the Trossachs, or enjoying the scenery and swearing at Jobson in the *coupés* of the Highland railway. This distinguished fame was not confined to his own country. At Berlin or Paris, in New York or Melbourne, in the newspapers of Tokio and the *cafés* of Algiers, you would have found traces of inveterate hostility to Jobson.

Shall we not honour him for it? The world is divided into two classes—the only proposition that all the clergy are agreed on—the bad and the good, the damned and the undamned, the sheep and the goats, the Russians and the Turks. Yet Jobson was not disliked by one party and loved by the other. He was hated by both. It is no small evidence of his importance that he was able to attract a hostility so widespread, and so intense.

He was a scion of an imperial race, the only race that can produce such men ; the race of a world-wide empire, and of sons who travel, and trade, and fight, and explore, under our splendid flag in every clime beneath the unwearied sun. These men are among our imperial wonders. Their lives are worthy to be written.

If it should seem to be rather a fatal comedown, to say that one of these imperial wonders was a man named Jobson, and not, for instance, Stanley, or any other aristocratic name, there is no help for it. Facts are facts : even Mr. W. R. Greg, who contests everything, cannot dispute that. Britons with very ordinary names doing very extraordinary things are persons not rare in the universe.

One must own that Jobson is neither an aristocratic nor a pretty name. It has never, like that of Smith, been enrolled on the list of our old nobility. A Smith is a First Lord, but no one ever heard of a Jobson who had attained to that distinction. For a proper name it is a very common one. Moreover, it suggests grief. The sons of ancient Job were less lucky than their progenitor. They were destroyed for his edification and improvement. While he survived, after scraping himself with a potsherd, and discussing

theology with his three censorious friends, to acquire an immense estate and beget a new family, the Jobsons of that day met with an unmitigated fate. Jobson is a name that points to catastrophe. And now to our sheep.

In the course of an imperial vagabondage, directed from time to time by that fickle and feeble headpiece of the British army, the Horse Guards, a certain regimental doctor and his wife found themselves, on an interesting occasion, in quarters at Barbadoes. A delightful society—when there are no insurrections of the blacks nor counter-revolts of the whites; a delicious climate, when there are no hurricanes, and the mercury has not run up to the top of the thermometer; a charming place to live in, if St. Patrick could once be induced to set foot upon the island, and kill all the mosquitos, centipedes ten inches long, and cockroaches as large as larks! In the days of slavery, and even now, a place of wealth; a place once of culture, not only of sugar, but of the mind. A place at one time of good society, a resident “plantocracy,” inhabiting handsome mansions; though now of injured mortgagers, ground down by two or three large money-lenders, and with decaying ruins of old family homes, showing how wrong wrecks vengeance on the children unto the third and fourth generation. A sunny, sunny island in the bright blue sea, with chalk and white coral beneath, supporting above the largest population per square mile of any spot on the globe. In this island Jobson first saw the light.

When Doctor Jobson first looked upon his first-born, which you may be sure was very early, he said to his wife—

“A brave boy, Marian, and every way perfect, thank God!”

Marian was Mrs. Jobson’s name.

“We will call him Thaddæus,” answered the poor lady in a whisper.

The doctor made a grimace, which she did not see, for her eyes were shut, and he replied as gently as he could—

“We will, darling.”

The doctor had been cornered. In the circumstances how could he help giving in? How could he argue the

question at such a moment, with such a wife, in such a situation? Mrs. Jobson was a diplomatist of the true feminine sagacity, pertinacity and directness of purpose. Lord Beaconsfield would have been a baby in her hands; Prince Gortschakoff would have had enough to do to hold his own. She had caught her man just at the nick of time, made him pass his word, and he well knew that after that she would be more of a Mede and Persian than the old men who went to Darius about Daniel. The peace and happiness of the good doctor's life were not worth an hour's purchase, were he to attempt to go back from his word. He knew it. He heaved a sigh and left the room.

The truth was that before the birth of our hero, there had been a prolonged controversy, not of a wholly amiable character, over the question, "What shall we call it if it is a boy?"—a question which seems whimsically inaccurate, but you may spend a year in trying to put it more correctly. Mrs. Jobson had views, very decided views, on this subject. The doctor had no particular views, but he was a man of taste, and might be relied upon to develop strong opinions against anything ugly or absurd.

Now Mrs. Jobson, *née* Tilbury, came from Norfolk, and if there was anything of which she was proud it was that her great-great-grandfather was a Swede of a noble family. He had been a professor at Upsala, at the time when Gustavus III. assumed the divine right of a king to execute a revolution for the good of his people. The worthy professor, named Von Stiffkin, considered it to be his duty as a freeman and descendant of freemen to protest against the despotic act of his king. The king took the protest unkindly, the Swedish people did not back it up with that vigour which is essential to success in revolutions, so the good man, too earnest to give in and too benevolent to fight, shook the dust off his feet, and came to Hull, whence he found his way to Norwich. There, being well received of its wealthy bankers and tradesmen, for he was a gentleman and a scholar, he married a widow lady of some fortune. The result was a large family of Swedo-Britannic-Norfolkians, who, however, objecting to the name of their ancestor, as other Norfolk men have since done, dropped the "Von," and assumed the

name of Stephen, in English ears certainly more euphonious than the original patronymic.

Mrs. Jobson, however, who was descended from a daughter of Von Stiffkin, always fell back on this distinguished ancestor. Darwin could have had no more bigoted disciple than this good soul, had he made his great discovery fifty years back. To her Swedish ancestor she attributed all the good qualities of her family. Since she would admit no bad ones, this negative advantage was also due to Von Stiffkin. Her mother had ingrained this into her, having inherited the habit from *her* mother, a veritable Miss Stiffkin. If Mrs. Jobson, *née* Marian Tilbury, had a good carriage, and she thought she had, it came of the old Swede's mother, "a distant relative, you know, of the Swedish royal family;" but of which of the many royal families wherewith that brave people have from time to time been blessed, no one was ever heard to specify. Mrs. Jobson prided herself on her French accent, and this she attributed to the transmission to her of the celebrated linguistic capacities of the old Swede, who at first had made a living in Norwich by teaching languages to the children of its numerous clergy. Mrs. Jobson's small feet and hands and her slightly aquiline and extremely agreeable little nose came, she divined, from the Swedish ancestor, who in truth had had a beak like a hawk's, and hands and feet like a gorilla's. Moreover, the good lady was wont to state that her decided character, of which she kept Doctor Jobson in continual remembrance, was the result of heredity; a notion the worthy doctor did not traverse, but he had been heard to say in confidence and well beyond the precincts of his quarters, that "old Von Stiffkin must have been the most obstinate old brute that ever lived."

This remarkable ancestor, running in the lady's head—if you will forgive the expression—was not to be expelled by argument nor overcome by entreaty. She was resolute that any child of hers should commemorate the relationship by at least assuming the Christian name of Von Stiffkin, which had been Thaddæus. Indeed, had she borne a daughter, she had been prepared to defy her husband's latinity and brook the world's ridicule, by calling her *Thaddæa*, a calamity

which heaven mercifully spared the good doctor in giving him a son. And although the worthy medico had sworn—mentally—that no persuasion nor torment would ever induce him to dub a son of his after this confounded old Scandinavian or Finn—he did not know which (and I own I don't)—here had he gone and passed his word to his wife that their noble infant should have the prefix of Thaddæus before the family name. So “Thaddæus” it was. There *was* a good argument for this which Mrs. Jobson was not learned enough to advance. Thaddæus was a name assumed by one of the Apostles to prevent his being confounded with Judas Iscariot. She might have urged that her son ought not to be exposed even to so nominal a danger.

Doctor and Mrs. Jobson had been married about eight years. He was an army surgeon, of now nearly forty years of age, handsome, sanguine in complexion as well as in temperament, tall, strong, with a good digestion—a faculty which enables a man to look genially on life. In society he was an adept, a favourite with women, including his wife, well-liked in the army and regarded as skilful in his profession.

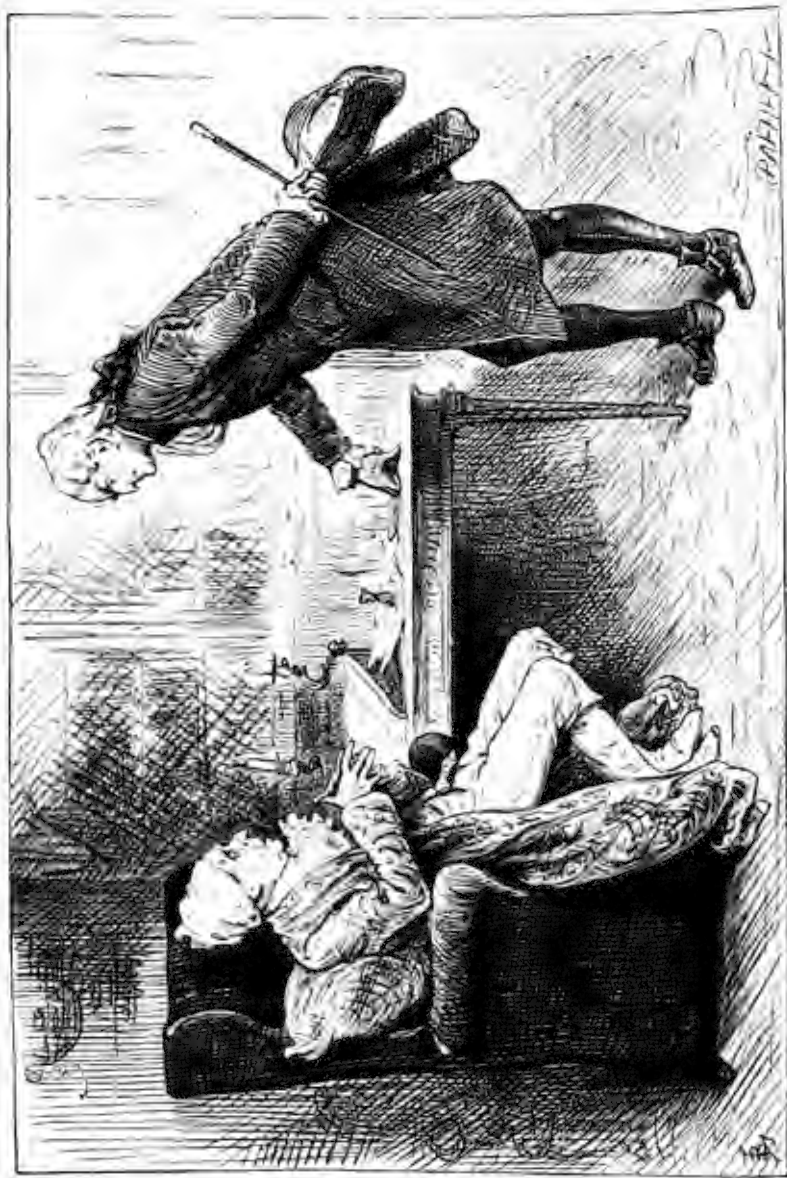
Doctor Jobson's father was also a doctor. He had settled ever so many years ago in the small though charming country town of Ludlow, in Shropshire : an inspiring spot for a man of taste and thought, for a doctor not so lovely. The inhabitants do not take kindly to disease. It is too pretty a place for moping, and hypochondria is unknown. Its society has always been good and select. Retired officials, and not over-rich connexions of noble families, have a fancy for retreating to such situations, where the absence of great estates of your own is in some degree compensated for by a scenery a little more select than that enjoyed by the world in general, and where a small knot of exclusives can affect to keep up, without being exposed to the ridicule of a vulgar world, a society based on the principles of mutual admiration and the social superiority of a few. To have the range of this chilly community, to dine with a few country gentlemen now and then at the “Three Feathers,” to be intimate at the houses of a couple of

clergymen and jolly at those of one or two retired merchants and the leading attorney, and to walk to the castle every day except Sunday, when you vary the amusement by walking to church, is not to fussy ambition an attractive programme of life. But Doctor Jobson, senior, was equally quiet and shrewd. He gradually established a wide practice, and his skill, lacquered by gentle manners, soon carried him out of Ludlow into the houses of the neighbouring gentry. When he could spare a day from professional engagements to hunt or to fish or to shoot, there were several noble or wealthy Samaritans within easy reach, who, if the doctor drove over in his humble cab, would set him up with a strong fencer, which he would ride with dexterity and pluck ; or give him a stretch of river, which he could whip with art ; or afford him a day's shooting, a sport which had not yet become a Russo-Turkish *battue*. Then would they dine him well afterwards, and so send him home rejoicing. Thus Doctor Jobson, senior, had picked up an air of good society, affected many of its ways at home and abroad, an affectation which costs money, and he transmitted these accomplishments to his son. This son, Arthur Cainham—a name, as we shall see, for which there was a remarkable reason—went to the Grammar School of King Edward VI. in the quaint old town, and thence was lucky to win a scholarship to Balliol. With some help from his father, who had nine children and could not spare much money, he took his degree. He was not brilliant, he loved exercise and he won no honours. His father made a surgeon of him, and a neighbouring peer, after whom the youth was named, secured him an army appointment.

The story of the origin of the elder Jobson's interest with his peer is too good to be lost to posterity. Lord Cainham, Baron Cainham of Baggot, in the county of Salop, was Lord Lieutenant of the county. He had been a Chief Justice of the King's Bench in the reign of that estimable sovereign and defender of the faith, George III. When Doctor Jobson was beginning to make his way, he was found by the peer to be an agreeable visitor and assuager of the gout, and thus came to be asked now and then to shooting parties at Hope-Baggot. The Lord Chief Justice

of the day, Sir William Pangbourne, having at one time chosen to go the Welsh Circuit, was invited by his ennobled predecessor to cross the border and take a couple of days' shooting in Baggot Woods. In the neighbourhood it was the general opinion that Lord Cainham was a bad shot. But as, to his credit, he had risen from solicitor's boy to Chief Justice, he was, to his discredit, anxious to make the world believe that he had been a gentleman all his life. Hence, no better preserves than those of Hope-Baggot existed in the county, and there was no one who affected more to enjoy sport than their noble owner. But it was mere affectation. Although handling solicitor's bags ought to make a man at home in every sort of sharp practice, it does not fit him to make large bags of feathered game.

When Lord Cainham and the Lord Chief Justice went out to shoot through Baggot coverts, they became separated for awhile from the rest of the company, and one of the keepers was shot. In fact he was pitted all over like small-pox with pellets of lead. The victim was discreetly uncommunicative to those who picked him up, but he attributed the mishap to an accidental discharge of a gun in the hands of one of the judges by its catching in a twig of bush. Doctor Jobson happened to be one of the party on that day. He took the man in hand, found that he was dangerously wounded, and gave the case the extreme attention it demanded when one of two such legal luminaries was concerned. Both the judges were silent as to the author of the catastrophe, and of course no one was rude enough to question them. But there was a good deal of discussion about it in the field, and even bets were taken that the man would die, and as to which of the judicial lights would be tried for manslaughter, some amiably backing their host for the honour, and others as amiably throwing him over. Jobson was not long in arriving at a conclusion. He picked out of the mans skin—fortunately he had been a long way off, though he was hit so thoroughly—one hundred and thirty-seven pellets. Lord Cainham asked the doctor to come to dine in the evening. He went, taking a look at the man on the way. No sooner had he reached the mansion than



"I thought I am extremely sorry for my worthy brother Canadian."

Page 11, Book 1.

he was invited by a servant to see the Lord Chief Justice in his bedroom.

"Doctor," said the Chief, "is this a serious case?"

"It is, Sir William," replied Jobson. "The shock to the system is very great. The patient's skin is potted all over, and some of the shot have penetrated in rather ticklish places. I cannot get at them."

"Humph!" said Sir William. "I am extremely sorry for my worthy brother Cainham. Tell me in confidence now, Doctor Jobson, has he always been such a shockingly indifferent shot?"

"I had never thought so," replied the doctor diplomatically.

"Ah!" said the Justice, shaking his head, "I sincerely hope, Doctor Jobson, you will be able to pull the patient through for my Lord's sake. I may tell you in the strictest confidence that he did it."

"I shall try my best," said Jobson, bowing.

"Do—I earnestly beg of you. It was to urge this most solemnly that I sent for you. Indeed, so relieved shall I be to know of your success,—for my brother Cainham's sake—that you will permit me to say that I shall esteem it a favour to be allowed to add from my own pocket a fee of fifty guineas to that you will receive from my Lord."

When Doctor Jobson left the Chief Justice's room he was waylaid by another lacquey.

"My Lord desired to see you in the library, sir, the moment you arrived."

To the library proceeded Jobson, where he found Lord Cainham, who knew nothing of the previous interview.

"How is your patient, Jobson?"

"Very bad, my Lord," cried Jobson, shrugging his shoulders. "It will be all I can do to pull him through."

"So!" cried his Lordship. "I am sorry—very sorry—I know I can trust you—for Pangbourne's sake. I hope no one in the field noticed how wildly he shot? I may tell you most strictly between ourselves, he did it."

"I shall do my best," said Jobson. "But you see, my Lord," looking sharply at the peer, "*he received the contents of two guns*, and it's a wonder there is any life left in the man."

"The deuce, Jobson!" cried the peer, "you are too sharp for anything. I was certain that Pangbourne had done it."

"And he seems quite sure that you had done it, my Lord. I have only just left him. You have both shot at the same bird, and gone equally wide of the mark. I have extracted over a hundred shot already."

There was no more to be said. The two legal sportsmen had mutual explanations with a hearty laugh at Jobson's shrewdness and their own divided responsibility. He saved the man, and was handsomely paid for it. Moreover, having the rare faculty of being able to keep his tongue within his teeth, he by that single trick won the esteem of the noble proprietor of Cainham, who never forgot the service. Hence, Doctor Jobson became quite a friend of the ex-Chancellor, and when a little Jobson was born he christened him after the peer, prefixing, however, the name of the princely son of Henry VII., who was married in the castle and died there. When Arthur Jobson had taken out his surgeon's certificate, Lord Cainham, as we have seen, procured him the appointment in the army. And thus he came at the time, when the little Thaddæus was born, to be stationed at Barbadoes with the 159th Foot.

CHAPTER II.

MASTER JOBSON'S AUNT.

DOCTOR JOBSON'S quarters overlooked the old and handsome parade-ground at St. Ann's, near Bridgetown, a fine stretch of flat greenish sward, edged with trees at one end, and towards the other breaking up into a tolerably well timbered bit of park-land. Facing it were the dingy-yellow, thick-walled barracks. At right angles to these, though at some distance off, was a double-storied building, containing officers' mess-rooms, club, and other quarters, well remembered by many a gallant officer in our army, who recalls at the same time the calmness and *ennui* of the quiet tropical life, unless indeed he were fortunate enough to have had the distraction of a hurricane, or an outbreak of negroes. These buildings were designed to resist a stronger foe than man, the raging of a force more fearful than the charge of armed battalions or the pom-melling of large artillery. They had successfully defied many a tornado. Yet the glass never began to fall and the sky to turn lurid and leaden, and the air to glow like a furnace, but the men of the garrison looked white in one another's faces, and seemed to be silently asking each other whether they were ready to take their place in the ranks of those that had gone below.

The officers' quarters were on the farther side from Bridgetown, past the great barracks which looked so slovenly and so antiquated. In front of the latter the sentinels stood where they could find shade. Men off duty lounged at the open windows in loosest undress; here and there a soldier's wife was visible, or being unseen made her presence felt by discharging a lively cannonade of words at her husband or any other unhappy male who happened to

be strolling in the vicinity. Were it not so broiling hot, were there no neat-limbed negresses to be seen stepping gracefully along the dry, baked road, carrying on their heads every description of article from a basket of yams to a cupful of molasses; if active little blackskins were not performing an imitative drill on the parade, or were there no lazy negroes in picturesque rags lying about wherever the sun shone hottest; the visitor might, glancing over the scene and surroundings, imagine himself in a garrison town in the west of Ireland, where some insane officer had taken it into his head to order the barracks to be brushed over with a wash of ochre.

The officers' quarters were distinguished from the more plebeian buildings by a fresh coat of whitewash, which shimmered in the noontide sun. Here and there the square deep-walled windows were decorated with flowers and creeping vines—the wax-plant, stephanotis, granadilla, and, suspended in wooden cradles, some Demerara orchids,

Even your bachelor warrior loves a pretty room, made bright by little trifles that recall light feminine fingers, or remind of loves that are dead; small niceties which are arranged sometimes with delicate and scrupulous care. The flowers of which you used to catch a glimpse in the windows as you passed the old quarters of gallant Buffs or Blues at Knightsbridge are significant of what you see the wide world over wherever our fighting-men are stationed. It is affecting in looking round the simple quarters of many a manly soldier or sailor to note these signs of a tenderness and simplicity which contrast finely with the rugged natures, the strong, rough limbs, the sonorous voices of men who would cheerfully lead up their companies to the dread crisis of a charge, and wield no idle sword in the hurlyburly of a fight. There, few of these windows, in a place where plants grow without tending, were without flowers or ferns neatly kept, throwing out ever a refining influence, reminding always of the gentle sex which, in their beauty and in the diffusive sweetness of their fragrance, they typify.

As for Doctor Jobson, he was a not unskilled botanist, and in his immediate neighbourhood, gallery, window and

stairs were crowded with specimens of the quaint or elegant vegetation of the West Indies.

The upper story of the building was reached by a long flight of wooden steps which led to a wide and rather dilapidated verandah. Here the bright uniforms of the various services often intermingled, or gay young officers lounged about in their white duck, looking like fancy millers, for the club-room with its literary and lunching facilities opened upon it. At the opposite end of the buildings the regimental doctor had his rooms. The accommodation was not extensive for a married man—a plain matted parlour opening on a bit of private verandah, a couple of bedrooms of fair size, and the doctor's little bathroom, dressingroom and laboratory all in one. Of course there was a pharmacy and surgery elsewhere in the charge of his assistants.

At the time when our hero was born, the domestic necessities being urgent, that weak-headed but good-natured aristocrat, Major Grenville, the smallest man in the regiment, was kind enough to turn out of his bedroom and hand it over for the use of Miss Bertha, Jobson's pretty sister, who was on a six months' visit to her relatives, partially on the pretence of looking after her invalid sister-in-law, and partially "to see the West Indies," and—well, to do what any young lady with any beauty to shew would like to do (and if she would not she would be abominably unnatural and disagreeable), to display her little figure and sweet attractions under the favourable circumstances of tropical costume to appreciative mankind. So Miss Bertha was installed in a curious room, with a carved pipe-rack, respectfully emptied by the outgoing owner but by no means successfully deodorised, which was nailed up over the place where a mantelpiece might have been; and a hanging shelf filled with a mixture of works on military drill, old betting almanacs, army-lists, two or three Bibles received at odd times from "sincere well-wishers," a batch of dog-eared French novels, and a miscellaneous assortment of literary remains in the shape of portions of novelettes, magazines and old school-books. The walls were brightened by portraits of two or three Derby winners; and

under the neat canopy of the mosquito curtains which dropped over the little iron bedstead was a row of coloured engravings of pretty women, some of noble degree and some of theatrical fame, indicating in the gallant young gentleman a remarkable variety of taste. At these, before she rose in the morning, Miss Bertha used to gaze wondering whether any persons so rare and beautiful really existed—as if she had never looked in her glass, the little goose!—and whether they really ever appeared in public dressed in the manner which the artists had represented? Whether they were aristocratic relations of the Honourable Major Grenville, or who they were? And which of them held the highest place in his regard?

Bertha was the doctor's favourite sister, whose age *may* be told, for it was only eighteen, and he thought her the prettiest and the best of some four or five; in speaking of a British family one need not be particular to a unit. It is an invidious thing to own to such favouritism in your family circle, especially if it is a large one, and you are the elder brother. The elder brother is a particularly English institution. He comes of the ancient days of feudalism, when the elder son assumed, along with the father's lands, the father's duties to his feudal lord or to the king, and thus had all the dignity of the man who stands for the family. So now he takes his father's honours, he is the proper heir to the responsibilities as well as to the benefits of his father's lands—if there are any; and, if there are not, he has the dignity without the substantials. Therefore his position is equally delicate and responsible. Not seldom he is as good as father, or mother, or both. He may misuse, or he may dignify, his position; but much depends on how he uses it. He is, or ought to be, the steel point of the wedge which the family behind him is to complete and drive into society.

Now, as for our Doctor Jobson, he had no idea of being a point, or of hardening like steel, or of driving into society. He was endowed with no organising, no commanding power. He had very decided likes and dislikes, as many quiet, semi-indolent people have, and have without permitting them to develop into pestilent

activity. So he took to Bertha in particular, although he loved all his brothers and sisters. He good-naturedly ignored his primogeniture, allowing his family to act with all the freedom of a republic, and not asking them to yield to an autocracy. If we study the histories of families that have risen, we shall find that not a few have grown to greatness through the imperious will of an elder son, well and wisely exerted. Should anyone be disposed to think this a valid argument in favour of maintaining the custom of primogeniture, in the more numerous cases where the elder son has none of that imperious temper and practical sagacity they are hereby made welcome to use it; and the author will not insist upon what a great philosopher has denominated "an author's inalienable natural right to the embodied form of his ideas."

Bertha Jobson, then, was a favourite of her big, even-tempered brother. And no one could deny that there were good reasons for it.

If we look in upon her at this moment, as she sits in the second chamber, now given up wholly to the infant Thaddæus and his nurse, the broad, brown, supple Bathsheba, commonly called "Sheby" (whose other name of Chinery, derived from an old planter, never rose to the surface), we shall be forced to say that it is a pretty sight. Lucky that the Honourable Major Grenville, or Captain Robert Egerton Broomhall, of the Engineers, or that gay aide-de-camp Captain Tremeneere, or Tom Carisbrook the biggest officer on the station, cannot now peep through the jealousies and catch a glimpse of that charming bit of maidenhood affecting the maturer graces of womanliness. Bertha is sitting there on a low cane seat, her white morning calico looking so dainty and so bright, an absurd little apron-tucker edged with a rosy-ribboned frilling, tied round her neat little waist; her tiny-slippered feet, with their open-worked stockings of the finest Lisle thread, dancing up and down as she gently jogs the red-faced stranger, and vainly laughs and nods into his watery and unintelligent blue eyes. Had those military man-killers, who had often stood up straight before cannon and musket without blenching, only cast a glance in on this scene, surely it

must have proved more perilous than the leading of a Forlorn Hope! Look at that small, proud head—it is a work of God and delicate as a shell; hair of a fine deep brown, plentiful, waving luxuriously with a natural ripple, gathered up from the fair neck to form a noble coronet of braided rings topped with a plume of tasselled curls. A smooth, oval forehead, and across it, as if pencilled by an artist, two curves of beauty, and beneath them, under long-lashed lids—like the feathery-edged petals of some delicate flower—the gently glowing eyes, dark-looking, not brown, nor black, a colour to be seen not once in a million, so tender, so speaking, so bright. A straight, even nose, just the slightest *retroussé*, but this only showing more conspicuously the sensitively chiselled nostril. An upper lip lying, like a bow of coral, on the soft pink cushion of the lip beneath. A chin curved and dimpled rarely, and teeth not pearly—pearl is no substance for fine teeth—but like purest, most translucent, bright, hard mother-of-pearl. Major Grenville had been known to say over the nuts after the champagne, that “he would like to let her bite him!” a coarse observation. For to think of Bertha Jobson profaning those pure incisors, even with the blue blood of the Grenvilles, was an altogether outrageous and impossible idea. But there is no doubt that the Honourable Mr. Grenville meant, by that remark, to convey the highest compliment which it was in his power to offer.

Master Jobson's small form is wreathed, not wrapped, in thin delicate textures, befitting the climate, and in virtue of the same he is permitted to bandy about his bare little arms as he pleases. But he seems content to lie staring at the delightful vision above him, and to revel in the gentle movement which is supposed to be essential to the paradise of babies.

Bertha, whose skin, under the influence of West Indian climate, has become lustrously transparent and fine, is shaking her pretty head, and talking the absurdest nonsense with puckered lips, and now and then opening her mouth, and tinkling with laughter like a silver bell. And Bathsheba standing by, with all her exaggeration of colour and feature, a massive bronze arm on either hip, a mon-

strous turban of red and yellow cashmere-printed calico towering above her huge smooth forehead, her mouth distended, displays pink gums and ivories to that extent, that no one would wonder if Bertha looking up were tempted to propitiate the ogress by throwing the baby into the enormous gulf. Thus would the world have been saved these memoirs and not a little unutterable groaning.

As Bertha tinkled like a silver chord, Bathsheba clanged and growled like a big, brown double-bass.

"O Buty Boy, Missy Berta! Nebber see piccaninny like dis. See de lillie arms—ha! ha!—look de lillie legs—like de spring chicken—ha! ha! Pletty lillie nose!"—here Bathsheba approached her expansive jaws so close to the rudimentary organ referred to, that Miss Bertha snatched the child in alarm to her bosom, and looked up with startled eyes at the good-natured but monstrous visage above her.

At this moment Doctor Jobson came in and gazed with admiring complacency at the singular picture, in which his sister's fair beauty and the Ethiopian grotesqueness of Bathsheba were so strikingly contrasted. This was the day after our hero's birth. The doctor had taken an additional hour's rest in the morning before going out to his professional duties. Thus the brother and sister met for the first time after the happy event.

"O Arthur," she exclaimed when she saw him, "he is the very *prettiest, dearest, most perfect*——"

Doctor Jobson stood looking with an air of pride at the very prettiest, dearest, most perfect, who, however, at this inopportune moment, set up a wheezy and barbaric cry, whereat he was clapped on Bertha's shoulder and rocked into silence.

"What are you going to call him, Arthur?" enquired the young lady, knowing something of the little difference with Mrs. Jobson about the naming of the lad, but expecting of course that her big brother would take his own way. "Don't you think Egerton is a pretty name? or Arthur?"

The doctor did not immediately answer. Bathsheba at the query had pricked up her ears and opened her eyes two diameters. His pale face slightly flushed, and he said—

"O, of course I shall let Marian name him."

"What!" cried little Bertha, in a loud, clear tone, and with some vehemence, "you *don't* mean to say, Arthur——?"

"I mean to say," he said slowly, "that he is to be named after his distinguished ancestor and relation——"

"Count Thaddæus Von Stiffkin, a distant connexion of the Swedish royal family! Oh! Arthur! There, Sheby, *take him!*" and Miss Jobson almost threw our hero into the black woman's arms, jumped up pouting, and stared indignantly at her brother. His fine, good-natured face was clouded, though not with anger; and then the impulsive young lady, taking a great jump, caught him round the neck and kissed him.

"O you dear old fellow!" she cried; "you are really the best and softest man in the world!"

Now, as hap would have it, every word of the above conversation was overheard through the thin partition by the invalid lady lying in the other room; and her fancy, a sufficiently active one, made up for what she could not see. Thus when Jobson had learned that his son's health was as well as that infant's brief experience of life justified anyone in expecting, and entered his wife's room with the innocent boldness of an angel, he found the poor lady in tears.

"Why, Marian," cried Jobson, startled, "are you ill?"

"Oh, no!"

The lady relapsed into a damp and silent pocket-handkerchief.

"What is it, dear Marian?"

The doctor laid his hand gently on one of the weak white hands which lay upon the sheet. She drew it away.

"Never mind," she murmured through the screen.

"Let me feel your pulse," said the doctor, gently. She was sobbing and slightly hysterical.

A shake of the head indicated that Mrs. J. did not regard that as a road to correct diagnosis.

"Bless me!" said the doctor aloud to himself. "Some one has been annoying her. Has Sheby been impertinent?" he inquired of his wife.

Another shake of the head.

"Do tell me then, please, what it is, my dear!"

There was just a trifle more of the peremptory in his tone than the doctor was wont to adopt.

The lady removed the handkerchief sufficiently to shew her eyes, which flashed an angry look at him.

"How *can* you speak to me in that tone, Arthur?—in my present situation too—O dear, I wish I was dead!" Sobbing.

"Pray, darling, don't—it might be serious—calm yourself."

"O Arthur, I never thought you could have done it! When I am here alone, ill, away from all my friends."

"I have done nothing——"

"You have!" more energetically than was in his professional opinion discreet.

"Don't excite yourself now, there's a dear good woman. You are weak."

"I am not too weak to hear and think, at all events, as well as anybody."

"I know, my dearest Marian, but, in your state you really must not excite yourself in this way."

"How can I help it?" cried poor Mrs. J., "when I am exposed to the jeers of your relatives, in my own hou-house, and before my own ser-servants, and in my hus-hus-husband's own pre-presence, without a sing-single word of re-proof on his part."

"Oh, my dear Marian!" cried Jobson, waking up to the situation, speaking earnestly, but with a whimsical twitch in his face, "I can assure you you have mistaken the true meaning of what occurred."

"And what *is* the true meaning, Mr. Jobson?" Mrs. J. wiped away the last tear, and looked at him with large steady eyes.

Doctor Jobson thus challenged to make a hasty, and somewhat delicate analysis, found on a rapid review of the facts, that it was extremely difficult to extract any meaning from what had occurred that was likely to satisfy Mrs. Jobson.

"What *was* the meaning?" said the lady, pressing her advantage. "You dislike the name I have selected for the dear boy, you know you do."

Jobson said nothing.

"You allow your sister to allude to it in contemptuous terms without any protest or reproof."

Jobson continued silent.

"And by your manner, if not by words, you take a part in slighting the memory of a great and estimable man, whose relationship to me, as you are aware, is one of the few gratifications of my life."

Jobson said never a word. His wife had anatomised his inner man like an Old Bailey barrister, and he stood confounded. Moreover, as a doctor, he dared not speak lest he should increase the malady. He was very much inclined to be angry ; but he glanced at her a moment and retort died upon his lips. He simply went up and put his arms round her and kissed her."

"Don't think any more about it," he said. "Bertha is young and thoughtless, and, perhaps, she was a little off her guard ; but she loves you and me too dearly, and when she grows a little older, she will learn to respect the memory of Count Von Stifkin. Shall I go and fetch little Thaddæus ?"

This was the first time that he had called the child by his name, and it pleased the good lady, who, in a few moments, was cuddling the young hopeful to her side with all the joy of maternity, while the doctor hung over them with a smiling face.

CHAPTER III.

LADY PILKINGTON.

THE news of our young Jobson's birth was speedily dispersed in the usual manner. Every one in the island knew Doctor Jobson, and no one disliked him. He received congratulations from all sides, though really he had only drawn a chance in one of the most hazardous of human sweepstakes. The announcement went to England by the next packet, and, in due time, found its way to India and the Colonies, and ere the last ripple had died away on the surface of human society, the boy was seeing, roaring, kicking and teething with plenty of promise. But long before tedious mails had brought the congratulatory letters from Madras and Singapore, Mrs. Jobson, who was by nature an active invalid, was up and moving about. Lady Pilkington, the wife of the General in command of the forces in the Windward Islands and British Guiana, Major-General Sir William Pilkington, K.C.B., came over with her comfortable phaeton and handsome Canadian ponies which she drove to admiration, and gave the convalescent a daily airing, Sundays excepted.

Lady Pilkington has much to say and do in these memoirs, and therefore, apart from her personal merits, deserves a particular description. Indeed, since people have taken to writing what are called "subjective novels"—from the fact, possibly, that they have no subject than object—I say, since then, unless one takes the trouble to write a minute and detailed analysis of every character named in the piece, from the butcher's boy who carries the love-letter to Miranda, to the Duchess who crazes the royal prince with her beauty, his work is considered "crude" and "sketchy." This appears to us to be rather an insult to intelligent readers, whose fancy is, by the critics (who may

however possibly know their public better than the author does), deemed to be so poor and flat that it requires everything to be set down in black and white. We cannot treat our readers in this way—venturing to assume that even if they should number no more than half a dozen, they can fill up an outline with body and colour, if it only be boldly and suggestively drawn.

Lady Pilkington is worth some careful description, for she was the very head and centre of society in Barbadoes. She was not a pretty woman, though her figure, face, and manners were what the French call *distinguées*—a word I use with regret because no Englishman has yet been able to discover or invent a term to express exactly the same shade of idea in English. Tall, energetic, decided, yet ladylike in movement and voice, grey-eyed, alert, with a keen knowledge of the world, a perfect lady, though with a slight dash of the freedom of regimental manners, she held her own admirably with the officers old and young, and took society in hand with a firm but quiet vigour which no one could challenge with any hope of success. With that smooth dark hair, tall somewhat narrow forehead, grey-blue eyes, straight, fine, thin nose, small firm lips, and rather deep chin, and a *fiercé* that knew nothing of obstacles and never thought of capitulation, this lady was yet most gentle, most loveable. I know not that this rare combination of force and of tenderness, of dignity and of unreserve, is ever found among any other people than the English and their descendants—certainly never in the perfection in which it was displayed in Lady Pilkington. You looked at her face to feel that you must like her, you looked again to know that you must respect her,

When her ladyship came rattling along the hard-bake, at an untropical pace, her back as straight as a board, whip in hand, reins admirably fingered, her clever black boy in the rumble behind, every officer turned out on the verandah and saluted with a marked respect and regard, not one iota of which was lost to the quick grey eyes, though their glance seemed to be fixed on the horses' ears.

"There is Lady P. going to give Jobson's wife a drive," says Captain R. Egerton Broomhall of the Royal Engineers,

with that masterly indifference to criticism which leads every Englishman to imagine that the most obvious fact receives a fresh interest when it is stated by his lips.

"By Jove! I wish she would drive out Jobson's sister," draws the Honourable Eden Grenville, Major in the 159th. "Since that chit of Jobson's arrived she has scarcely been seen out of doors. 'Pon my word it is cruelty to animals to keep a poor girl mewed up there like a married woman at her time of life."

"And cruelty to animals to deprive you of a glimpse of her—eh, Grenville!" says grisly old Major Barclay, taking his glass out of his eye, and then screwing it in more tightly than ever as he quizzically regards the peevish officer. Grenville is lying back in a cane chair smoking a cigar.

"She occupies his room, you know," cries Lieutenant Ewbank, "and he is obliged to put up with a hammock in my quarters, which doubles him up like a foot-rule and marks him all over a racquet pattern. He groans all night long over his hard fate and his too-easy good nature. And with all that she will hardly look at him."

"Ah," ejaculates Grenville, blowing into the air a pillar of smoke, "there is not a fellow in the regiment who does not envy me. To have one's room occupied by such a divinity—one's quarters illuminated by the charm of such an angel—one's floor trod on by such dainty little feet—one's pillow pressed by cheeks so smooth and fair——"

A roar of laughter stops the stream of Grenville's eloquence, and he returns blushing and subdued to his cigar.

"Hoh!" says old Barclay, "where have you been getting up your rhetoric—at Codrington,* eh? It is more florid, however, than fresh, to my taste. And it's all wasted. I saw Miss Jobson last evening."

"What!" cry half a dozen voices, in a tone charged with mortification. Grenville jumps from his chair.

"Sit down, Grenville, and keep as cool as you can. You see you young fellows in the Line are in the habit of

* Admiral Codrington's College at Barbadoes was and is one of the best foundations the Colonies have ever received from a single benefactor.

looking down on the scientific services—like the old duffer* and his advisers at the H. G., but you see science may occasionally be a handmaid to sentiment.”

“Bravo, Barclay!” cries Broomhall, taking out his pocket-book and pretending to make a note. “Quite an epigram. Between Grenville with his rhetoric, and you with your wit——”

“And you with your cheek,” drawls Grenville.

“Silence, you young men, when your elder is speaking, shouts Barclay. “I went in last evening after mess on Jobson’s invitation to take a cup of tea, and help him to place a curious centipede which he had bought from a nigger in Bridgetown, and which, by the way, we finally determined to be a specimen of the *Scolopendra angulata*, no doubt introduced in some ship from Trinidad. Miss Bertha poured out the tea.”

A general groan, to which some contribute in earnest and some in fun, and then a loud shout of “Boy!” brings in a negro, who receives eight or nine orders for punch and bitters.

“She looked prettier than ever,” continues the old officer, screwing up his grisly face maliciously, “and moreover she insisted on exhibiting to me the little brat, *Jobsonius recentissimus*, and I assure you, Grenville, she handled him like a mother. For my own part I would rather examine a centipede.”

Grenville groaned again.

“But I’ll tell you what, though,” adds the Major, “there is a bit of a shindy in Jobson’s wigwam. Miss Bertha holds up the youngster and says to me, ‘What do you think they are going to call it, Major Barclay?’”

“‘Oh, Arthur, I suppose,’ I said.

“Jobson looked sheepish, and Mrs. J. looked like thunder.

* In reporting Major Barclay *verbatim*, I am happy to say that he is dead, and beyond the reach of a Court-martial. This present editor is only concerned to give actual facts, and state actual words, and not to give his own opinions. The reference here is, of course, to a bygone age and army administration, as the date shows; and an unmilitary editor may therefore assume that there is no one in the improved, regenerated army who would speak thus disrespectfully of existing authorities. There are cases to show that if he did, he would do it at his peril.

“‘No—Thad-dæ-us!’ says Miss Bertha, pursing up her lips and glancing sideways at the mamma, who lay on a lounge looking magnificent in a white cap and gown.

“‘The Christian name of an ancestor of some distinction in my own family,’ says Mrs. J. severely to me, for I was smiling, you know, at the little witch’s mischief—‘Count Thaddæus Von Stiffkin, my great-great-grandfather.’”

Old Barclay contrives to imitate the familiar tone and manner of Jobson’s good lady, who is not at all disliked by the men, with sufficient success to draw down the house.

“You may depend upon it,” he adds, “there is some fun up about that confounded name.”

“And you will work the raw, no doubt,” says his brother Engineer, Captain Broomhall, who is the only one that does not seem to relish the elder’s story.

“Thad-dæ-us—the deuce!” cries Grenville, thoughtfully pulling his moustache, and gazing up at the ceiling. “Why he will be her nephew, you know!”

“A discovery,” says Broomhall. “This comes of associating with the scientific services. Grenville has at length made out that a brother’s son is a nephew!”

“Ah! yes, you know,” drawls the Honourable; “it’s all very well to laugh, you know, but Bertha is a very pretty name, and Thad-Thad-Thaddæus, confound it, is horribly disagreeable.”

“What possible business can it be of yours?” cries Egerton Broomhall, with a little more seriousness and heat than the occasion seems to warrant. “He is not your nephew.”

“But he might be, you know,” says Barclay, reproducing Grenville’s manner and tone so accurately that he is rewarded with peals of laughter.

Before Grenville has time to retort, an exclamation from a young officer brings every one up, and they rush out on the verandah. Lady Pilkington’s carriage is coming round the corner, and beside her ladyship, instead of the doctor’s wife, sits Miss Bertha Jobson, in a cloud of white muslin, with a hat of fine Tuscan straw, of which that age appreciated the true beauty, broad-brimmed, artistically moulded, curled up on one side, decorated with a single ostrich

feather, a thin gauzy veil floating lightly from it. A delicious little pink silk parasol, her special pride, is coquettishly handled. It is the latest thing from London, and the newest in her not too extensive wardrobe. She looks somewhat pale, but her eyes sparkle and her face blooms into colour as she glances up with innocent frankness and bows to the group, every man uncovered, and with his head slightly bent in deferential admiration. They watch the phaeton, as it swiftly bowls along, until it has turned down the road by the barracks, and is out of sight. Till then not a word is said. The quiet influence of virgin beauty has passed over those strong and manly hearts, and touched them all, young and old, as with a glow of heavenly sunshine.

"By Jove!" cries Grenville, in a deep voice, as without any further explanation of this unintelligible exclamation, he casts his hat on the ground and throws himself into the cane chair again. "Boy! Boy!"

"Yes, sir."

"Sherry and bitters; a tablespoonful of bitters, do you hear?"

"Ha! ha!" cries Tremenneere, the General's aide-de-camp, who is lounging with the mess, "poor youth, you crave the bitters since the sweets are not for your enjoyment, eh?"

Grenville affects to be a little offended and does not reply.

The character of this gentleman is perhaps worth sketching. Major the Honourable Edgar de Ponsonby Eden Grenville, was a younger son of the Earl of Wribbenhall of Wribbenhall, in Yorkshire, and of divers other places, the most important of all his possessions, in every sense, being some coal mines on Cannockchase. That coal had kept aglow a family dignity, which under the extravagant efforts of two or three generations of the family had bid fair to flicker out at last in bankruptcy and ruin. But when, through no fault of their owner's, a farm or two of comparatively small value turned out to be superimposed on veins of black diamonds, the family scutcheon brightened up and began to look proud again. Mr. Eden Grenville, who, like his father, was a Conservative,

used to argue that these discoveries of treasure on the ancient lands of aristocratic owners was a proof of the value of Divine Providence. This idea has certainly been notably illustrated in the history of "our old nobility," and in face of facts it hardly seems possible to traverse the theorem with effect. The Earl of Wribbenhall sat in the House of Lords. His elder son, with a good steady voting capacity, sat in the House of Commons, where he shook hands every day with half a dozen relatives who were fellow members. His second son held one of the richest livings in England. The third was the Major of the 159th. Into that position, though not yet thirty-five years of age, he had been jockeyed by processes known only to those who have influence at the Horse Guards.

It is the universal opinion in the army that the Horse Guards is the most brilliant and transparent imposture in the world. By the scientific services, which it does all it can to thwart and keep down below the services in which brains are least necessary, it is looked upon as the head of a patented system of favouritism and caste. Around it gather the gay butterflies of a rich Court, and it too often feeds them with the sugared lie of a martial honour, without the substantial meed of martial knowledge and skill. It is the centre of a personal influence, ever increasing, ever invading the few poor privileges of the ordinary body of officers, crushing out any signs of independence among those who have not the benefit of its patronage or the advantage of its ear. No man even now can cross one of its aristocratic favourites without meeting with rebuke or punishment, and it is said that fortunate aristocrats do not enjoy that strict share of justice which a stern military code exacts from plebeians. At the Horse Guards caste has strongly intrenched itself under the patronage of royalty. It must and will be broken down by the vigorous hand of reform. May it not be hoped that this may be effectively done without involving royalty in its ruin?

Major Edgar de Ponsonby Eden Grenville was one of many who have profited by the fact that his friends were "influential at the Horse Guards." The prevalence of such a phrase in the army of a free government is perhaps in

itself an equivocal fact. Grenville, however, had no reason to complain that the eye of the Commander-in-chief had discerned in him qualities which that young officer's most intimate friend has failed as yet to detect.

Regarded externally, Major Grenville was not a model of a fighting man. He was only about five feet seven inches in height, and not even proportionally broad, in fact proportionally rather the reverse. The legs on which he ambled about were less those of a warrior than a crane, though they may have been potentially belligerent. The waist round which he buckled his martial blade, looked fitter for feminine stays than for a soldier's weapons. And his little arms promised neither the length nor the strength suitable for effective work with a real sword. Nevertheless, to do him justice, he could stand on his pins, and handle his bodkin with dexterity : and he would have led a forlorn hope with the only enthusiasm that ever stirred his blood except his enthusiasm for women. He was a lady's man—in his own estimation. His doll-like face was not unhandsome, concealed as the greater part of it was by the dark silky hair of his moustache and whiskers. That estimation, however, was essentially a low and vulgar one. With polished, though affected manners, his appreciation of the sex was mean and sensual. His earliest successes in gallantry had been in the Earl's servants' hall. Low affections bring low ideas, and low ideals. His estimates of ladies were drawn from his experience of ladies' maids. In too many cases he had found that estimate to be not below the mark. I know not that it is possible for a man so trained, although doubtless he may learn much, ever to know, to understand all that blessed and hallowing refinement which enters into intercourse with a pure and high-strung womanhood. Grenville, by birth and courtesy "gentleman," conceived the title to be just, because he often felt maudlin and sentimental impulses of admiration for the sex. But the root of these movements was a false and unmanly gallantry : the gross, the stupid, the superficial chivalry of the middle and Jacobite ages, which admired equally the outward polish and the inward corruption of a Boccaccio, a De Brantome, and a De Grammont.

Meantime, Lady Pilkington and Miss Bertha were chatting together, while the phaeton rolled on into the country, over a road hard and level. Here and there along their route they passed bits of cover, and some rough hedge-rows, but most of the country was taken up with unfenced sugar-fields, some lying fallow, others with their rows of rich and graceful vegetation, others a mere expanse of black earth, in which negroes, mostly women, were hoeing up the limey undersoil, to enrich the land for the young slips. Again they passed old-fashioned mansions substantially built, with their Italian façades, and coats of arms carved over their doorways or the grand entrances to the stable-yards. In contrast with these were the rows of little boxes inhabited by the negroes, with their green dingy shutters; around them disporting armies of sable children, children with no education, few clothes, no hopes in life beyond those of the play of a brutal instinct restrained only within the limits of a paternal law, and the pursuit of a lazy toil simply for the means of keeping body and soul together. Yet they laughed and sang and played, and now and then old grey-headed men who looked as if they had been rolling their black knobs in a cotton-field, or slim brown girls, or mature-looking matrons, flashed glittering teeth at the pretty picture passing in the carriage.

Lady Pilkington flicked a huge fly off the skin of the near pony.

"By the way, Bertha," said she, "Marian has asked Sir William and me to be godfather and godmother to the little son who has incidentally made such a fuss in the garrison. She has not told me what they have decided to call him."

"Thaddæus," replied Miss Bertha sternly.

"Thaddæus!" exclaimed her Ladyship. "Mercy on us, what an atrocity? Tell me what *is* the meaning of it? Doctor Jobson is surely not a Dissenter in disguise. I always suspected him of a leaning that way with his Low Church notions."

"O dear no, Lady Pilkington. What made you think of that?"

"It sounds very like a dissenting name," replied her Ladyship. "Thaddæus! Why it will be the ruin of the child. Fancy Lieutenant-General Thaddæus Jobson!

The only possible opening for him is a Methody minister."

"Please don't say any more about it, dear Lady Pilkington. It makes me perfectly savage. And such a beautiful boy. It is the name of an ancestor of Marian's, Count——"

"Von Stiffkin. Oh! I know all about him, the old fudge. I hate Von Stiffkin. Marian is always serving him up cold to her friends. I look upon it as an amiable weakness. We all have weaknesses, my dear, and some of them are not amiable. But this, I shall take the liberty of telling Marian, is absolutely folly and wickedness. It spoils the boy's future for a mere fancy"

"I *do* wish," said Bertha, clasping her hands together, "you could induce her to change her views. I am certain Arthur detests the very idea of it. Of course he does! It is too monstrous. But he is so good-natured and——"

"And such a calf," said her Ladyship, brusquely. "There, don't look shocked; but really these good-natured idiots do stir up all my indignation. I like to see a man, a man."

Lady Pilkington undoubtedly spoke in perfect sincerity, and yet the world used to say that the General, her husband, was everywhere in command, except on his own hearth. Women of an energetic temper with a strong individuality can abide nothing less patiently than a man who is not able to enforce or to win their reverence. And however supreme their rule at home, they condemn the men who yield to feminine control. It is a paradox, but a real one. Her Ladyship, with her imperious nature, had little respect for a yielding habit, and for that very reason it was doubtful whether any one could have been found strong enough to bring her under marital control. But she was fond of Doctor Jobson, nevertheless, and regarded him as a thorough gentleman, which, almost in her view, meant the pink of perfection.

"You see," said Bertha, feeling called on to say something in her brother's defence, "he couldn't help it. Marian was so poorly, and how could he resist it?"

"Stuff, my dear! You know nothing about it. Call a son by the hideous name of Thaddæus because his

wife was out of sorts! Suppose she had set her heart on Nebuchadnezzar or Maharshalahashbaz?"

Bertha laughed.

"If he thought it would save her any pain, he would have done it."

"Well," cried Lady Pilkington, and then she stopped and bit her lip, and cut at one of the ponies. For she was a naturally impetuous lady, always under restraint—the perfection of a woman. She changed the subject.

"By the way, Bertha, where have you been quartered all this time? I have only just thought of it. You must have been terribly pinched for room."

"Oh!" replied Bertha, a slight pink flush passing over her cheek, "Major Grenville has been kind enough to give up his room to me, and I am installed there for the present very comfortably. Such a funny place!" added Miss Bertha, turning round, with very widely opened eyes, upon her companion, who catching the expression laughed in a quiet way.

"I daresay. I know all about it. Tobacco-pipes, pewter mugs—punch-bowl cracked—ballet-dancers—sporting sketches—fifty French novels, if he has not hidden them away. This is not the sort of thing for you, Bertha. You shall come up and stay with me until the doctor can get new quarters, or make other arrangements. We will restore the little gentleman to his room."

"Pray do not think of it, Lady Pilkington," said Bertha, with singular earnestness. "I am very comfortable, I can assure you; and he is *most kind*. He begged my brother to keep the room for six months if he wished it."

Lady Pilkington cast a sharp side-glance on the young girl's face, and then went on quietly—

"Your brother may keep Grenville's room as long as he likes, but *you* will come and stay with me. Yes! Let us go back at once and settle the question!"

Round went the horses' heads in a twinkling; and her Ladyship's clear-cut resolute face indicated that Doctor Jobson, were he inclined for once in his life to make a stand, would do it in vain. Bertha sat silent and uncomfortable. Young, fresh, unskilled in the world, as yet

untutored in those extreme refinements of propriety which come of a too worldly and human experience, she was unable to follow the sharp quick movements of the mind of her more worldly companion. What could she, in her little unsophisticated intelligence, divine of her Ladyship's motives—her Ladyship so keen, so able, so experienced? Perhaps on her part Lady Pilkington might have remembered how little it was possible for Bertha to understand in her simplicity that it was better for her not to be under any obligation, however remote, to Major Grenville. After all, in teaching young people too minutely how to avoid evil there is often a perilous revelation of what it is. Is not that indeed the danger of the confessional?

No observer could have been more keen than Lady Pilkington. All that nervous quick sympathy of hers made her intuitively alive to everything that was going on around her. There was not an officer on the station whose character she had not fathomed, of whose habits and ways of thought she had not a shrewd idea. You would have said of her, "She is too wise: she knows too much." She *knew* little; she intuitively apprehended much, much that never even formulated itself in her mind, or which, if it did, was simply treated by her with scientific simplicity, as a fact looked at in the way in which a surgeon looks on the subjects of his scalpel. Could such knowledge come (you say) without tarnishing the mind that had taken it in? The answer is, *yes*. To change the illustration already used, there are minds that by a rapid, an almost unconscious process, can scan without injurious absorption the lineaments of evil, as a doctor at a glance makes an instantaneous diagnosis of some foul disease, without the pain of repulsive scrutiny. And Lady Pilkington, worldly, but strong and pure, was one of those women who, in such a situation as hers, holding constant intercourse with so many men of leisure, of fashion, of loose ideas, is to them a minister of good in a way that no other agent can be. Many a young fellow had she taken in hand, and, without permitting him to know how much she had guessed or learned about him, had brought her winning though

peremptory influence to bear against his foibles and to develop and strengthen the better side of his nature.

Bertha's difficulty arose from no troubled sense of propriety, but from a totally different cause. It was the pride of an untrained simplicity. Her father was not rich. To the home circle some little sacrifices had been involved, even in providing the slight outfit for Bertha's West Indian trip. Her small wardrobe, however well manœuvred on her part, was painfully deficient. For a ball, or an occasional dinner-party, it was not so hard by clever modistic ingenuity and secret labour in her own room, to appear in society in a very charming toilette. That, she was thinking, would be out of the question at the stylish house of Lady Pilkington, what with her maid, and her maid's maid, and the ordinary conditions of that open tropical life. So that the heart of Miss Jobson was really fluttering with anxiety while the phaeton swiftly rolled homewards. Her answers to Lady Pilkington's bright remarks were rather rambling. The General's wife, however, coolly swept on. They passed twos and threes of the younger officers, who, sly dogs, had with singular unanimity happened to choose for the route of their evening's constitutional the road by which her Ladyship had driven. At the barracks, Mrs. Jobson was firmly taken in hand by the wife of the commanding officer. An attempt at resistance, for Mrs. Jobson had the female objection to be dictated to, was instantly suppressed in military style by the threat that if Bertha was not permitted to go, her Ladyship would never stand godmother to any being called Thaddæus.

"The name of a great man, no doubt, Maria. 'Thaddæus of Warsaw,' you know, and then that dear old Von Stiffkin you talk so much about, but, so ugly! And so like a Dissenter! However, there, dear, don't be put out it is apostolic, and no doubt you mean to make a parson of him. Very good thing, too the Reverend Thaddæus Jobson. He may be a Bishop. I have no doubt it is the proper name for the little brat. Thank God! I have never had the trouble of naming a child."

She said this with a little suppressed sigh, which she affected to cover with a yawn.

"Now," she went on, "we will settle this at once. Bertha shall drive over with me. We dine in less than an hour. That white dress will do admirably, my dear, with a flower. Morgan shall get you a basketful. I'll give you twenty minutes to pack your things up. There, run away while I talk with Maria."

So Bertha, half distressed and half pleased, went away to Grenville's room, and put together her little wardrobe ; and an hour later was sitting at dinner on the General's right, with Major Loftus the General's secretary, on the left, and Tremenheere the gay aide-de-camp, opposite ; and when she went to bed she could not help thinking that it was the most brilliant and delightful evening she had ever spent.

CHAPTER IV

DRIBLETS.

THE christening of the infant Jobson took place one afternoon at the cathedral, Sir William and Lady Pilkington standing godfather and godmother.

Young Jobson had not been born with a silver spoon in his mouth. But he soon had a good substitute. In those dark days of weak invention, the steam-engine even being still like Jobson, an undeveloped force, the advantages of india-rubber for making imitation mammillary tubes had not been discerned. Little bowls of silver with elongated nozzles could, however, be purchased at the silversmiths, to which, after a certain time, infants took kindly enough, and one of these "boats" was presented by his obliging god-papa to the unconscious Jobson. If since that time it has occasionally been up other spouts than those of our hero and his children, it has always been a point of honour to recover it, for it is a family heirloom. But, behold the difference between that age and this! That bowl, as we have hinted, survived to pap all Thaddæus Jobson's children, while half a dozen of the best of Mr. Maw's ingenious invention will hardly carry a single infant through his teething. Ah! Postumus, how swiftly the old-fashioned days are gliding away! *Thorough* is to be no more an English notion. Sober and steady workmanship is relegated to machines. Are we really doomed, as liberal ideas and liberal principles and science and the higher education and all that, are developed, to find ourselves driven to shoddy, slip-shoddy, veneered and plated, and temporary makeshifts? I look at these weeds upon my legs, not so long ago fashioned by the brilliant Poole to adorn my handsome nether limbs, and now shrunk, ill-formed, already losing tint like the leaves in

autumn. Where is that old stock of Exeter and Huddersfield, wearing its texture firmly and keeping its colours bright and steady through, long, long years? Ay! in the olden time we and all things used to live. Now we merely exist. Then, Postumus, if we glided down the stream, we watched the brown banks and the bosky slopes with lazy eyes, scarce conscious of the gentle motion: now they rudely hurry by, as we are pressed on by the roaring and volcanic energies of the age. Then, Postumus, you and I, thinking long and carefully, went to our work as other men went, with the cautious deliberation and slow, patient earnestness of an old traditional, dignified, experience: now we see them all around us rush at their labours like a school-boy to a task—the sooner done, the quicker the play! These cursed machines have done the work! The product a man's own hand and brain turns out he esteems and loves. The work a machine turns out the man regards as he regards the numbers in a sum of addition in arithmetic. They are nought to him except to serve a purpose in a tale. Yet, Postumus, while you and I may grunt and growl and gnash our toothless gums together, would the world be any the better think you if we could bring it back old times again?

Of Thaddæus, having him now before us duly born and christened, and with a pap-bowl of solid silver as his whole fortune, there is for the nonce little to be related. How he would lie and open wondering blue eyes on the broad and brown-faced Sheby, and what unexpressed and inexpressible thought welled up in the trickling fountain of his mind—underground rustling, as it were, of a few drops of ideas drawn from the far-off hills of immensity—it needs not to tell. To those, true philosophers, who with loving gaze have sought to penetrate not only beyond the bright, crystal stars, but into the small arcana of such undeveloped souls as this, it might be no unloved task for us to try and conjure up some probable history of this infant's dumb, but yet not wholly wordless or idealess fraction of life. But to how few is it given, not so much to know, as to care to know, the mysteries of God and nature? And unto such this baby Jobson is but a mewling, teething, tiresome animal.

Wherefore, let him grow—let him grow with Sheby as a black guard over him.

A sincere woman, by-the-way, was Sheby, of a strong Pagano-Methodist flavour! Singing songs of Zion and songs of Baal indiscriminately and with equally loving gusto: but always songs: and always with a certain wild, sweet fervour, very strange and weird-like. It used to worry the good Doctor, and irritate Mrs. Jobson, it was so other-worldish and touching, thus:—

SHEBY. Hum, Hùm, Hum, Hùm,
Hùm, Hu-um—Hùm!

MRS. J. Sheby! Sheby!

SHEBY. Missy call?

MRS. J. What *are* you humming at? Can't you stop singing for an hour? It drives me distracted.

SHEBY. O yes, missy, keep um quite still dis time

“ *Ho! Jesus lub de sinner too,
He die on de tree for Peter;
Ho——*”

DR. J. (*from the parlour*). Sheby! Sheby!

SHEBY (*sotto voce*). Lord! dere's Massa now! .
Massa!

DR. J. Will you stop that confounded singing?

SHEBY. On'y leetle hummy, Massa, keep de lillie baby still.

DR. J. Well, stop your “leetle hummy,” do you hear? I can't work for you.

SHEBY. All right, Massa—stop for sartain. . Ha!
Hum!

“ *One day see a Coromantee boy,
Hi, hi! ki, yi!
He jump and he wink and he show his joy,
Hi, hi! ki, yi!*”

DR. J. }
MRS. J. } She—by!

Happily for the young Jobson, Sheby took to him as a cat takes to a puppy. No face was more welcome to him than the walnut-coloured mask, with its white eyes and teeth; no pillow more soft than her brown shoulder. While he, unable to count his days and distinguish his

nights, thus struggled into another being, events were occurring which were to exert a critical influence on his life and character. These must in justice be now duly recorded.

Miss Bertha had settled down, with something more than comfort, at Queen's House. Lady Pilkington, without intrusion, had quickly taken in all the pretty maid's resources, and read all her little anxieties. Two days after Bertha had been installed in a pretty room, lofty and large, laid with cool white matting, furnished with handsome mahogany furniture, for the Yankees in those days had not invented the means of turning out light furniture sticks by the million, her hostess unceremoniously entered the room with a bright piece of pink silk thrown over her arm.

"Look here, Bertha !" she cried. "The packet is in, and my parcels have arrived. Those stupid creatures have sent me a box of dresses, and one of them is pink. I detest pink for myself : it does not suit me. But I like it on others, and it will go with your complexion splendidly. See !" And her Ladyship threw a yard over Bertha's shoulder, who was standing with her dress off opposite the cheval glass. The neat little figure glancing into the mirror, saw in a moment that Lady Pilkington was right, and her eye sparkled—only for a moment—a shadow passed over her face and she turned to her Ladyship, disengaging herself at the same moment from the silk.

"It is a beauty but, Lady Pilkington, my brother could not possibly afford it—" a flush mantling the foolish cheek at the confession.

"Bertha dear," said her Ladyship, quietly kissing the cheek. "Never allude to money matters. It is vulgar. Do you think, you foolish little chit, that I could have a commercial transaction with you or your brother ? Nonsense. You are my ward and child for the present, and here is a dress I must throw away unless I can get some one to wear it. And here is a little woman it suits exactly : and there is Morgan, who can cut and fit it to a nicety—and so there is nothing more to be said. You shall wear it at the Governor's ball."

Bertha drew away her eyes and moved from the bright silk. Then she looked straight at Lady Pilkington and said—

“How kind of you to think of it! But I cannot take it.”

“Oh, I won’t have any ‘buts,’ my dear. There! It is quite settled.”

“No, please, dear Lady Pilkington,” said Bertha, clasping her hands. “I don’t know what to say, but—but—I cannot take it.”

The General’s wife bit her lip, and searched the soft, dark eye which had lit up with a little fire. Was this real or affected? She waited for Bertha to go on.

“I would rather wear my own white foularde if I may—may go in it—if—if, it is fit for me to go so poorly dressed with you, Lady Pilkington; and if not, I—I think I would rather go home to my brother,” said Bertha, a tear bursting from her eye.

The flush that momentarily passed over Lady Pilkington’s face was instantly chased away by a smile. She threw the silk on the bed, and put her arm round Bertha.

“You naughty, proud, insolent, little Englishwoman,” she cried, giving her a kiss. “Do as you please, but let me say a word to you; never harbour suspicions, they are unwholesome. Take people for what they say and do, as long as you decently can. There was no *arrière-pensée* in my mind

nothing but the pleasure of finding that the mistake of my English agents had enabled me to bring two beauties in silk and flesh together. But now you shan’t have the dress! I shall sell it to Maria at half-price. Meantime let Morgan have your own dress, that pretty white foularde, and she shall titivate it for you. You must remember this is *the* ball of the year.”

When Morgan, Lady Pilkington’s maid, had taken away one of those slight and simple costumes, which thrown over the gentle figures, transform them into the likeness of angels that sail in clouds, and after some days brought it back again, it was so transfigured that Bertha could not recognise it. A delightful little bodice of pink silk had been miraculously substituted for the former one, and beautiful French

flowers were looped up and trussed about the skirt. What could Bertha do but try it on, half-vexed and half-delighted, while even the sedate Morgan gave vent to cries of admiration and pleasure at the success of her skilful handiwork.

CHAPTER V.

THE GOVERNOR'S BALL.

THE ball at the Governor's was designed to be the most brilliant entertainment that had ever been given in the history of Barbadoes. This was, indeed, a lofty ambition: for Barbadoes has been, ever since its development as a great plantation, the scene of many costly and remarkable festivities. The year before the Governor's lady resolved on this grand attempt, Lady Pilkington had carried off the palm, in a dance of unusual splendour. The success of the General's lady produced, what was perhaps, a natural effect upon the mind of Mrs. Sinclair, the Governor's wife. Not born with a title, and as the partner simply of a hardworking, successful official, she felt that she could not afford, having due regard to her dignity, to be outdone in a sphere in which she ought to be supreme. The majesty of the king was presented in Mr. Sinclair, feebly it may be, but still reflectively, and his wife was not going to be outshone by stars of a lesser magnitude. Wherefore, all the good lady's ingenuity, and all that the resources of the colony could devise or supply was brought in aid to produce effects surpassing those of the neat and *recherché* entertainment at the General's quarters, which had so delighted the society of the island. Certainly Mrs. Sinclair had a marked advantage in the scenery department. Government House was a noble mansion, with a grand staircase, a fine dining-room on the ground floor, and above a suite of reception rooms worthy of a nobleman's seat. Behind the house were large and well-kept gardens. The old planters were aristocratic in their tastes and habits. It was their pride to have provided the Queen's representative among them with the grandest house in the West Indies.

To this attractive scene then, on the evening of the ball, every one in the island who had the least pretension to a place in "society," was hastening in every kind of vehicle, from the handsome state carriages of old-fashioned planters, to strange-looking waggons drawn by mules. The garden in front of the mansion was illuminated with lanterns, which burned brightly in the motionless air, despite the boom and tick of insects, large and small, against their paper shadings. The guests coming up the drive from one gate, descended at the foot of the broad stone steps, decorated on either hand with magnificent plants, and found themselves immediately in front of a grand *coup d'œil*: the decorated hall, the dazzling chandeliers and other lights, the bright-liveried negro servants, the blue and red uniforms of navy and army officers, and the light cloudy dresses of the ladies, as they pressed up the stairs to the head of the staircase, where the Governor and Mrs. Sinclair were standing to receive their guests. The crowd seemed not to mind the heat. It excused the limp and clinging dresses and *décolletée* fashion of the ladies, of which the mosquitos took ludicrous advantage whenever they could get their victims to be quiet for a few moments. From the first floor through the open jalousies the approaching visitors could hear the inspiring strains of the band of the 159th and the hum of many voices.

It was upon this scene that at ten o'clock precisely the dashing carriage of General Pilkington delivered the party from the Queen's House, followed in a humbler vehicle by the military secretary and the aide-de-camp. These wicked fellows had taken a mean advantage of their superior opportunity, and engaged Miss Bertha for the first two dances. Indeed they had presumed further, and would have half-filled her card with their monopolising claims, had not Lady Pilkington, with a stern military frown, cut off the negotiations, and ordered them to be content with the advantage they had won.

When General and Lady Pilkington were announced, with Miss Jobson, and the gallant old officer having assigned to the aide-de-camp the honour of escorting Lady

Pilkington, followed with Bertha on his arm, her half-confusion and blushing grace at the unusual honour, drew upon her every eye, and a buzz of admiration proceeded from all parts of the room, especially from a band of gallant officers, who, regardless of the willing fair ones that lined the walls, were lying in wait for Miss Jobson's arrival.

Lady Pilkington saw them in a moment. By a dexterous flank movement, she interposed against a rush of light infantry with cards in their hands, and her strategy being admirably seconded by the General, who was a keen humourist, and entered heartily into the fun of the occasion, she secured her charge in a corner at an arm of a sofa, of which she took the other seat.

"Now, my dear," she said to the fluttering damsel, "the first quadrille is over. Take your card and mark down the two next dances for the two boys." She always called the *home* officers her "boys." "And now, look here—here comes Mr. Broomhall. You may give him a dance; but mind, only engage for the first eight dances, and only once with each partner."

She had hardly time to whisper this to Bertha, when the gallant Engineer came up a good first, and Grenville, a bad second, could be seen pushing through the crowd. The brown, manly face of Captain Broomhall was bright with a smile of victory as he respectfully saluted Lady Pilkington, and spoke to her, before turning to squeeze Bertha's little glove, and, as rapidly as he decently could, to claim the honour of a dance. Lady Pilkington glanced approval when he put down his name for a quadrille; but her face became quite stern when the young gentleman, presuming on friendship, said he must have two dances.

"No, no! Mr. Broomhall. Fairplay you know. Here comes Grenville. What does he want, I wonder? You cannot wish to take out such an old frump as I am, Mr. Grenville? Very well. I will do you the honour."

Grenville bowed and laughed a little awkwardly, but he surrendered at discretion.

"The very next quadrille after I have danced with his Excellency, Mr. Grenville, I will give you. Do you hear?"

It is the Lancers, I see. Put down your name. You know Miss Jobson already, I think?"

Know Miss Jobson! But he was on the verge of making a fool of himself.

"Oh! of course I do. How do you do, Miss Jobson?—know Miss Jobson, Lady Pilkington? You are joking. He! he! Why don't you know that—that to my extreme felicity, Miss Jobson occupies—ah! does me the honour——"

"Occupies no small portion of your regard, eh?" interrupted her ladyship. "Of course she does. Now, if you want to put your name down on her card I will permit it as a great favour—*once* mind!—but here comes Tremeneere to claim her for the first dance. Don't forget me, sir, for the Lancers, or I shall have you Court-martialled. Stay, give me your arm, Major Grenville, and take me over there to old Mrs. Tratten, I haven't seen her for an age."

Bertha sailed out into the dance, with sealed orders to return to the same position as soon as it was over. When she returned there was her big brother chatting with Lady Pilkington, a smile on his handsome face, and that gentle cherubic deference in attitude and manner which he always showed to women of every degree. He could not help admiring his sister, glancing at her dress with a little pride as well as wonder, and then at Lady Pilkington with a half-doubtful, half-gratified look. That sharp lady, watching his face, put up a forefinger in a warning way, and he held his tongue.

"Look here," said her ladyship, "put down your ear, Doctor Jobson. She looks dangerously pretty to night. I suppose you won't stay long, but just keep an eye on her while you are here."

"I shall not go away until you do," he said simply. And he went lounging about the rooms hour after hour, watching the obvious admiration his sister was exciting in every quarter, with strangely mingled feelings at his heart of pride and foreboding.

So the time went, and Bertha's eight dances were over, and supper was announced; whereupon Lady Pilkington peremptorily ordered Bertha into the custody of her brother,

though Tremenheere had entreated to be allowed "to take the little beauty down."

It was here that Egerton Broomhall had his opportunity. Doctor Jobson was his friend. Abandoning without disguise his duty to the fair ones who crowded the rooms, Broomhall coolly followed the brother and sister. By rare luck they became separated from the select upper circle which surrounded the representative of royalty, and the young Engineer found himself able to slip into a seat next to Bertha. He instantly became the subject of enraged comment among his brother officers. Lady Pilkington seemed to take no notice; Broomhall stood well in her opinion. He was a man in whom the keen-eyed dame had as yet detected no faults worse than his poverty, a little conceit, and over-much of the pedantry of learning, for Broomhall was a singularly cultured man, and did not mind showing himself sometimes as rather a too superior person. Twenty delicious minutes he spent by Bertha's side, his heart telling the seconds with its throbs, his whole frame thrilling at every soft musical word and every shy glance she threw at him. She took "just a tiny" glass of champagne, for she did not care for wine, and promised to dance the next waltz with him—if Lady Pilkington did not object. And for his part he drank champagne like a soldier, not a tiny glass, but in bumpers, and in his heart he pledged each glass to her. From a totally different reason, Major Grenville, far down the table, was also drinking champagne in quantities, glancing up and across the table with a lowering face, and failing to amuse the handsome Miss Brinsden of Chateaufort, the Creole heiress, with a few detached monosyllables. Many other young men, in sorrow and vexation, balked of the supernal favour of a dance or a promenade with the doctor's beautiful sister, were flooding themselves with clarets and stronger drinks as anodynes to their mortification.

When supper was over they—Broomhall and Bertha and the doctor—sauntered through the unpeopled pavilion filled with plants, which had been erected beyond the supper-room; sauntered, the two younger ones, with all their

souls in their eyes, and their eyes bent on each other ; sauntered as you and I, Edith, sauntered in our young foolish days, in a delicious dream of joy, circled round with we knew not what bright *nebulae* of hopes and wishes, which shut us in with ourselves, and barred out all the world besides ; in such a walking dream they threaded their way through the great ferns, and among the camellias, and by the ivory-bugled stephanotis filling the night air with its luscious overpowering sweetness. Jobson, seeing it was only Broomhall, dozed along examining the plants, taking a scientific interest in those glorious forms, and, for the nonce, altogether lost to his charge. Suddenly there was a rustling of dresses. Mrs. Sinclair came hurrying through on Grenville's arm.

"Oh ! Mr. Broomhall, here you are at last. Where have you been ? Every one is calling out for a song from you before dancing recommences. No refusal please—an improvisation. Come now. One of your best, for my sake. Will you ?"

Out of the nebulous radiance, out of the delicious dream, down from the fifth heaven at least, stepped Broomhall into vulgar life.

"Well, really. Mrs. Sinclair, I had not expected such a call : and I am totally out of gear," replied the Captain of Engineers.

"Oh," cried Mrs. Sinclair, "we don't expect a man to be prepared for an improvisation, you know, Captain Broomhall ! And you will really have us all to believe that your improvisations are prepared !"

There was a slight, scarcely perceptible, pressure on his arm, and a voice in his ear—

"Oh ! *do*, Mr. Broomhall. Sing something pretty and sentimental now, and not one of the funny ones. We shall be so delighted."

Upon this Captain Broomhall made no further objection. His whole soul went into that curious effort, in which he was an adept, the effort of throwing into harmony and verse the feeling of the moment : one of the most wonderful gifts that can be bestowed by Nature, or acquired by art. Broomhall's brown face and dark lustrous eyes, and the

smooth soft aquiline curve of his nose, seemed to betray a far-off southern origin, going back perhaps (who knows?) as far as the Roman occupation. And sometimes that fiery passionate part of his nature broke out and took full sway over the steady English temperament. To-night he was in his southern humour. Already, as he gave Mrs. Sinclair his arm, there was a play of light over his features and a lustre in his dark eyes that told of triumph. A momentary shadow flitted across his face, as he resigned Miss Jobson to Major Grenville. These two officers were very good friends. Broomhall, unlike many of his brother officers, imagined that he had discovered something more in Grenville than frivolous thought, a distorted morality, and a selfish pride. Still, our Captain would have shrunk from making of Grenville an intimate friend. They were capital mess-room and bachelor colleagues. Yet for some reason or other Broomhall did not care to see Bertha's little glove on the Major's uniform. Bertha, for herself, had no defined dislike of Grenville. He had been more than obliging, and always made himself as agreeable to her as it was in his nature or power to be. At the moment, however, she hardly knew whose arm she took, for her interest was absorbed by Broomhall's performance. She had heard him before, and very naïvely she let slip her thoughts to Grenville.

"He will be so anxious," she said. "I hope he will make it a success."

"Oh! ah! yes!" was Grenville's reply, as he stuck his glass up and seemed to contemplate narrowly the broad back of the amateur they were following, as if to read there some indication of the chances of a triumph. "O, God bless me! yes, Miss Jobson, of course. He never breaks down, you know. 'Pon my word, never knew him break down at anything he undertook. Plenty of nerve, you know. It's nerve that does it, as old Screwby said at Badajoz. I heard the story from a man who was there. I should like to tell it to you some day. But of course one would not think of telling stories here, and to you. Divine, isn't it?"

"What?" said Miss Bertha.

"O, everything—music, people, evening, flowers, fair creatures—*You?*"

"And you, Major Grenville?" cried Bertha.

"Ha, ha, ha! Very good. You had me there—eh? But here we are, and (*setto voce*) by Jove, here's Lady P Attention!"

Broomhall was at the piano, sitting back, with one foot on the pedal, the other caressing the leg of the music-stool. His right hand ran easily over the notes, while with his left he lightly touched his forehead, as if to set the springs of poetry and melody in motion. Then he played with his head thrown back, not in an idiotic rapture, but with a quiet, calm expression. "Just as if he saw an angel," Bertha described it, and the incorrigible Grenville replied—

"Oh! but he ain't looking this way, you know."

After the prelude he sang.

I.

*O fair and sweet!
O sweet and fair!
O dainty sweet and fair!
I kneel at thy dear feet:
Up to thy glowing eyes I gaze,
Resplendent with the diamond rays
Of a fine beauty rare and clear
As star in southern hemisphere;
Be mine, be mine,
My sweet, my sweet!*

II.

*O fair and sweet!
O sweet and fair!
O blushing sweet and fair!
Thy drooping lashes meet
And trembling lids my burning look.
Unclasp to me the virgin book;
In the chaste tablets let me read
If my heart tells me true indeed
That thou art mine,
My sweet, my sweet!*

III.

*O sweet and fair!
O fair and sweet!
O mocking and malicious sweet!
O dainty and delicious care!
Is it pain or bliss? I will forswear
All else than these—be sorrow joy
Or pleasure death, or taste but cloy,
If thou art mine,
My sweet, my sweet!*

This song Broomhall sang with even more than his wonted power and tenderness. There was a hush through all the room, and every heart seemed to thrill with responsive feeling. They had never heard him sing like this : with so much soul, so much passion and intensity. He did not improvise the music, throwing all his force into the effort to express something worthy of his love, worthy of his feelings ; but artfully adapted it from an old troubadour air to the simple but erotic words which his excited mind rapidly threw together.

Amidst the applause which followed, Broomhall found his way back to Bertha's side. He heard nothing of the compliments which showered upon him on every hand ; he saw nothing but Her voice and face. In these he read his true and real triumph. Lady Pilkington, looking at him keenly, thought she had never seen a man look so "taking," and kindly shutting her eyes for the moment, had not the heart to interfere with the little drama (comedy or tragedy, who could tell ?) which was being so obviously performed under her eyes. The two young people waltzed together, scarcely knowing where they were, and whether they danced on cloud or wood. Only one waltz. For it was a rule of Lady Pilkington's to leave after supper—not a bad one. In those days, even more than in these, the hilarity towards the small hours grew sometimes a little boisterous, sometimes a little vulgar.

It was amusing to see the party from the lodge go off : the popular wife of the General, and the *belle* of the evening, followed by a score of the most brilliant *beaux*, each striving to render some small service, to earn one single glance from those fine eyes.

O youth, youth ! O bright, untravelled morn, where we see nought besides the fresh dews and the awakening eyes of flowers ! O pursuit of phantoms flying and chase of airy spirits ! O sowing of wind and radiance, to reap but shadows ! O sweet intoxication of new light, to be followed by the dread realisation of an oncoming darkness !

While they were driving home, the General taking a doze in the background, Lady Pilkington brushed Bertha's cheek lightly with the down on the end of her fan.

"Cruel little fairy !" she said. "You have bewitched too many poor young fellows to-night. Broomhall is lost completely—a total wreck. Poor Grenville is stranded, unable to fly a signal of distress. I shall have to nurse Tremenheere and my dear Bob. Now let me tell you something. Broomhall is as poor as a church mouse—absolutely nothing to live on but his pay. Grenville is a poor aristocrat, without a heart, who must marry another aristocrat, or a rich plebeian. And you, my dear, are not rich. My two boys have hardly anything in the world except their wits—and those not superfluously bright—to endow them. On the other hand, Bertha, that yellowish-green young Fullarton, who wanted so much to dance with you, and whom you treated so scurvily, is the only son and succeeds to about ten thousand a year in sweet sugar, strong rum and hard cash."

"Oh ! Lady Pilkington !"

"Hush, my dear ! There are things it is better to leave unsaid, for fear you should have to regret that you ever said them. Don't be foolish, now. Keep all these young fellows at a distance. Barbadoes is not a place where you should select a *parti*, do you hear ?"

CHAPTER VI.

AN INDISCREET YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

NO one could blame Lady Pilkington for her carefully calculated and designedly rude cynicism. She had taken an extreme fancy for the simple, though by no means weak, little beauty, who clung to her affectionately, and was so frank and so fearless in all points of personal dignity and honour. And as her Ladyship's regard was deep, her sense of the perils which environed her charge, and her terror lest some untoward incident should come of the young girl's fascinating powers, grew to an almost painful intensity. The cold, quick sentences fell as they were intended, harshly on Bertha's fine nature, but they did not produce the wished-for effect. There was no necessity for warning Bertha against Grenville. In showing him any favouritism she was struggling against an instinctive feeling within her. But the obligation which her brother had accepted of him, on her account, bound her to some grateful return. Thus Major Grenville's advantage in the running was more apparent than real.

As regarded Broomhall, Lady Pilkington's words were not fortunately chosen. Bertha Jobson was herself a child of respectable poverty. She was accustomed, as we have seen, to many restraints upon her ambitions; to small economies and to the daily mortification of petty wishes unsatisfied. Genteel poverty, therefore, had for her no terrors; for her nature was not of the sort that grows flaccid and pettish under the perpetual worries of low fortune, but rather waxes stiffer, and faces them daily with a stronger and less resentful submission. The tinsel nature that tarnishes and corrodes under the trials of life was not hers, and she felt no temptation to allow her free choice to be hampered or strangled by the thought, "I will put myself beyond the

reach of such petty cares." Therefore Lady Pilkington's words about Broomhall were rather calculated to awaken Bertha's sympathy, than to suppress her growing admiration for the brilliant Engineer. He was a man worth living for, worthy the consecration of a life, at no greater sacrifices, so far as she could foresee, than those she was accustomed every day to endure. So that when he called at Queen's House the day after the ball, there was something tender, quiet, but the reality of which thrilled through him, in the pressure of her hand, in her voice, in her timid yet speaking eye. He said little or nothing to her, talking all the time to Lady Pilkington, who studiously kept the conversation clear of anything remotely sentimental, and said as he was taking leave—

"You have not forgotten the picnic, I hope Mr. Broomhall? We *rendezvous* here and drive to Codrington. I have found a young lady for you—Miss Brinsden—a charmer, three thousand a year at least, and such a figure!"

He looked at her steadily, as if to read whether she was in earnest, then he glanced at Bertha.

"I shall certainly be here in good time, Lady Pilkington, and any one you entrust to my care, I shall be honoured to attend to, but no serious attentions in that quarter from me, I can assure you. If there is anybody who really would esteem the favour, remember I am ever at your service."

And so, bowing, he went away, while Lady Pilkington looked after him with a glance of admiration at his manly figure and imperturbable courtesy.

"There goes a thorough gentleman," she said. "And a thorough gentleman, my dear, is the most dangerous man in the world."

The sun was dropping fast towards the western sea, and her Ladyship's ponies came round for the afternoon airing. Bertha excused herself from going on the ground of weariness—an excuse needing no further argument than her pale cheeks and tired eyes. So the General's wife went off, trotting her little steeds, and Bertha lounged awhile in the hammock which swung in the verandah, and

then, catching up an umbrella, went out into the garden—a piece of ground of some extent, and in Lady Pilkington's time beautifully kept. There was a fine spring on the rise, which, after filling a huge marble bath, overflowed into a series of little reservoirs, with small cascades between, fringed with Demerara ferns. And down the winding path, with its occasional steps of marble, the way led to a grand group of cork-trees, which flung out from their cracked and jagged boles their long crooked branches and shady foliage. Bertha walked on, in a dream, and in that dream one face alone appeared.

Suddenly steps sounded near her, and turning she was a little startled to see young Fullarton coming down the path hurriedly from the house. Calling on Lady Pilkington and her guest, and finding they were "not at home," he had turned to leave, when he espied Bertha's umbrella in the garden. Taking a colonial license, the report of which would be certain to score him out of her Ladyship's grace for ever, he walked down the path to speak to Miss Jobson. His face had a smile on it which was sickly and unpleasant, and his deep dark eyes seemed to Bertha, who had paused under the shade of the cork-trees, to glow like fire. She felt very uneasy as he approached her and tendered his hand.

"O Miss Jobson!" he said, as she just touched his fingers, "I have come to call, and seeing you out here, I made bold to come and pay my respects personally."

"Lady Pilkington is not here," said Bertha, as coldly and drily as she could.

She turned towards the house, and as he offered to place himself at her side to accompany her, she stopped and drew herself away. Standing still, she looked as if she expected Mr. Fullarton to take his leave. He was evidently embarrassed, in doubt what to say or do in response to these tactics.

"Did you enjoy yourself last evening?" he said. His eye, glowing strangely, was fixed too eagerly upon her, and she could not restrain the angry blood that rushed over her neck and face under his intense gaze.

"Yes," she said.

"You were the *belle* of the room!" he blurted out. "Everybody said so."

What could she say to that? She simply moved on rather fast towards the house. But she felt that she must say something to the man clinging beside her.

"Did you dance much?" she asked. His face flushed up dark and purple. He turned round and looked at her as he answered—

"I danced only once. It was with you. Surely," he added after a pause, and somewhat curtly, "you noticed that."

She did not like his look or his tone. Fortunately they were close to the back verandah, and she made an excuse for going in that way. He stood irresolute for an instant, as she said Good-bye: then seizing her hand, before she could forestall the movement, he clasped it warmly.

"Good-bye, Miss Jobson," he said, his tone softening; "I hope I shall see you at the picnic."

Then, taking off his hat, he turned and ran off through the shrubbery; and leaping into a dog-cart which a liveried groom was holding in the avenue, he drove rapidly away.

The more Bertha mused upon this strange interview the less she liked it. There was little in the words, but very much in the manner. And yet when Bertha came to consider how she should describe it to Lady Pilkington, she shrank from the task, because it was impossible to give it any meaning without drawing conclusions for which she felt that she could not possibly adduce or even picture the grounds. She might have attributed to doubtful words an import which a sharper wit than hers would think they did not properly bear. Mr. Fullarton was a gentleman in position and education. No expense had been spared in the latter. He had been educated at Westminster and Oxford. His mother was a refined woman, and though Bertha did not like him, she had never during their slight previous intercourse felt the singular repugnance which his appearance and behaviour had that afternoon excited. She therefore thought it better to keep the matter to herself, determined, if he should again adopt this strange behaviour to take Lady Pilkington into her confidence.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PICNIC.

BRIGHT rose the dawn on the day of the picnic, and fair and crisp seemed the dancing waves to the young officers who crowded the baths on the shore, safe within the line of breakers from intrusive *barracoutas*, with their rapacious morning appetites and all-powerful jaws. As one after another dashed from the top of the steps into the warm clear brine, shouts and cries of healthy enjoyment enlivened the air. Among the bathers Broomhall seemed brightest and most hilarious. He struck out far over the gloriously shining surface until he seemed lost in the shimmering halo, and some of his brother officers began to fear lest he had fallen in with a shark and been minced up for breakfast. At their shouts back he came hand over hand, the water rolling gaily away from his impulsive shoulder, and his dark head working through the sparkling wavelets. There is no such bathing in the world as this—where eye and feeling are at once delighted, and the sea laps the swimmer with a voluptuous warmth and lovingness. As he stood up panting, in a musing attitude, looking out towards the far-off point he had attained, a towel round his loins, his arms crossed, the salt dew dripping on his shoulders from the crisp dark hair, his friends could not restrain a glance of admiration at his manly height and fine proportions.

Thus began the day, as each day begins, with its pleasures or duties or cares, its promises of joy or sorrow, to which fate often gives so thoroughly the lie.

The *rendezvous* of the picnic, to which all the officials of the island and many of the planters and their families had been invited, was at the grounds of the college founded by old Admiral Codrington, fifteen or sixteen miles from

Bridgetown, in the midst of a charming prospect, reminding one of some sequestered by-spot in Devonshire, only that here and there tall palms threw up their feathery outline against the azure sky. This unique colonial institute of learning is within easy reach of one of the most exquisite views in the island, a point from a hill, commanding a pretty panorama of sylvan scenery. Gazing upon the fair prospect, the man who has travelled is reminded how much the general features of Nature are alike the world over. Here your first cry is, "How English!"—and it is not till you drop visual generalisation, and begin to scan details, that you detect how many things there are which a British or an American landscape cannot show.

The college, with a creeping plant which looked like ivy in the distance, trained over its front, with embowering trees around it, a park-like mead, and a small but pretty avenue of varied foliage, lay in a valley. On the lawn Lady Pilkington had caused some tents to be erected, and by peculiar favour, had obtained from the college authorities, leave—one shudders to tell it—to use the big hall as a dancing-room. And here on that bright afternoon had gathered the pick of Barbadian Society, here were to be seen displayed, its fairest feminine charms and most handsome or distinguished manliness.

They had all driven down after lunch in lively, laughing groups, the women in the lightest and brightest of toilettes, the men in white jackets and trousers, and natty straw hats, and bright coloured socks and low French pumps, and towards four o'clock the green, the shrubbery and all the walks in the neighbourhood were gay with moving groups or couples, swinging over their heads umbrellas of various tints.

Lady Pilkington was, of course, first on the ground, supported by her whole military squad, Tremeneere, Loftus, Carington, Grenville, Barclay, Broomhall, &c., &c., all in the gayest possible humour. For some time Miss Bertha had the whole of the military honours to herself, and very difficult indeed was it to respond to all the calls that were made upon her attention by the rival beaux; but by and by other fair ones began to stream in, and Lady Pilkington

marched her squadrons about and stationed her pickets with masterly generalship. Broomhall's discipline was severely tried—for, after being called away, just as he had shaken hands with Bertha, to brace up a tent which was in a shaky condition, he was not allowed to return within the dangerous circle, but was entrusted with Miss Brinsden, whom he was commanded to serve with refreshments, and then to escort to the first cotillon. He was wishing the cedar-tinted girl, with her fine dark eyes, eyebrows and hair, in Stamboul or Pekin, when he saw Miss Jobson borne off, under the same martial law, by Fullarton. This gnawed him to the very heart, for he knew Fullarton was one of the richest heirs in the island, and passed for an engaging fellow with the ladies. Bertha for her part was far from comfortable when she took the young Creole's arm, which positively trembled under her scarcely perceptible touch. She heartily wished she had told Lady Pilkington the story of his visit. However, there were plenty of people about, conversation was easy and general, she was light-hearted, and though he looked somewhat pale and *distrain*, he made evident efforts to be agreeable to her.

They went to the dancing-room and took their places in the first cotillon. By a strange chance they were opposite Captain Broomhall and his partner. Nothing could have been more obnoxious to Fullarton, and he would have escaped to some other part of the room, had not Bertha expressed a wish to remain where they were. Miss Brinsden was a girl whom his mother particularly favoured as a candidate for his hand; and it is paying the young lady no indignity to say so, for she had a very decided liking for him. As for Broomhall, the young Barbadian instinctively regarded him as a dangerous rival. He had watched the young Engineer at the ball, had seen how marked his attention was to Bertha, how different her demeanour to Broomhall and to him; he had looked on at the supper with envious anger, had seen them lounging together afterwards in the pavilion, and, above all, had heard the song and watched her face as it was sung. In proportion to the intensity of his nature, which was dangerously charged with the elements of passion and

selfishness, was the burning within him of dislike and hatred of the man who so successfully challenged his supremacy. Broomhall on his part, whose eyes were quick and alert, had seen some of the efforts of the Barbadian to pay courtesies to Miss Bertha with a feeling which at first was one of contempt. But by and by, as his affection became absorbed and carried away, he began to think of his own disabilities, and to remember that this young man, apart from mere advantages of person, might well attract the eye of an ambitious girl, or of her ambitious friends. And though Bertha's treatment of Fullarton at the ball had been anything but encouraging, while, on the contrary, her treatment of him, Captain Broomhall, R.E., had—well, had cut him up and left him a wreck on the quicksands of love—he could not wholly repress, spite of strong efforts, a feeling of jealousy at Mr. Fullarton's temporary success. Broomhall's keen mind saw in all Lady Pilkington's arrangements an object. She was a woman he admired and loved too for her unsleeping and sagacious supervision of all who came under her influence. The instant that he saw her assigning Bertha to the young Barbadian, a whole flotilla of fanciful motives were launched and bobbed about on his lively imagination.

Thus it came to pass that these two young men, throughout this harmless cotillon, were watching each other with quickened senses. This inner feeling operated differently on the two natures. Broomhall, being of a frank and bold temper, took every advantage the dance afforded him of contact or speech with Bertha to play the part of an exaggerated familiarity; while Fullarton, scarcely able to control the conflict of passion which was going on within him, grew paler and more awkward as the dance went on. Once Broomhall somewhat rudely rallied him in a gay tone that jarred through his whole being.

"Look out, sir! O you idiot! Don't you see your fair partner waiting and languishing for you all alone? No wonder, Miss Jobson!" he cried to her. "You see you drive us all distracted."

Whew, whew! Captain Broomhall, a speech not alone foolish but also most indiscreet and ungallant; but as you

paid dearly for it afterwards, let it pass as one of the pardonable *faux pas* of insane adoration. When, immediately after it, he put his arm round his partner's waist for the last turn of the cotillon, a little tear shook out of her eye on his coat, and his heart smote him for his rudeness. So much so that he went away with her, and took her a walk, and expended all his gallant ingenuities in trying to make up for his error. And she saw it and understood it, and let him see that she was pacified, and so without a word on the subject on either side they made it up, and he led her back to the dance.

Meantime, Bertha, who was passionately fond of dancing, had had a sedate polka with Major Grenville and a galop with Tremenheere. And now Fullarton, who had simply stood by and devoured her every movement with eager eyes, was at her side again, and pressing her to give him another dance. Quite a group of importunate suitors were around her, and the Barbadian's urgency, and the rather impolite earnestness with which he pushed it, excited some comment and a little indignation. It was at this moment that Broomhall arrived on the scene. Bowing over Grenville's head, he addressed Bertha—

"Have you reserved one dance for me, Miss Jobson? It is a promise a week old, remember."

Bertha looked up joyfully. It was so opportune a rescue from her embarrassment, that, without thinking of consequences, she caught at it at once.

"The truth is," she said, "I am trying to persuade everybody that I am too tired to dance, and I really am. Take me to Lady Pilkington and let me ask her whether I may dance any more."

Lady Pilkington could not be everywhere. At picnics conventional regularities are rather ostentatiously abandoned. She was looking after the more elderly people somewhere. So Broomhall and Bertha went away to search for her. It was just five o'clock, and as they walked out of the heated room into the long shadow the trees threw from the declining sun they both seemed to breathe a fresh breath.

"Oh, how delightful!" cried Bertha. Her arm was nestling cosily in on the white jacket, next to his heart.

He had never felt so near a realisation of bliss in his life. Almost unconsciously his arm gave a little pressure towards his side.

"Yes," he answered, "it's delicious." He swung off his straw hat and so walked along, with his noble brow and curly hair fanned by the rising sunset breeze.

The General and two or three dowagers were sitting on chairs in the shade.

Broomhall saluted.

"Where is Lady Pilkington, sir?"

"She has gone up to the cliff, to get a glimpse before sundown."

"Let us go," murmured Broomhall to his companion. And they slowly passed on: on through the avenue up the hill. At a distance following them was a solitary figure. It watched sharply every movement. It foresaw where they were going. Presently it ran round the base of the hill, using the trees and the unevenness of the ground, and got round the brow unseen, and then stood there behind a group of trees, beside the path it knew they must take, And they, still arm-in-arm, came on. Broomhall had looked round with his trained eye, and seen no one in sight; he had pressed again the little hand towards his heart; he had bent down his tall form to bring his lips near her ear, and was talking to her swiftly, eagerly, eloquently, for feeling seemed to loosen his tongue. And she at length, clasping his arm with both her hands and leaning on him, was looking up into his face with rapt attention.

"And you will call me Robin?" he said. "My mother used to call me Robin, though every one else said Egerton. Say Robin."

"Robin, Robin, Robin!"

Ah! great heaven, what is this? This moment he is looking rapturously at the sweet thing that utter his name. The next there is a rush of something behind them! A stroke! The head goes up in an agony, comes down in a faint, and he lies prone on his face, and there under his shoulder, all over the white jacket, spurts a tide of crimson

The air is pierced with shrieks, with terrible, sharp shrieks. She is down on the ground. With a supernatural effort she

has turned over the prostrate form—only a form—heavy and lifeless. Oh the poor white face that grovelled in the dust, which she tenderly wipes away ! Oh the white lips ! Oh the handsome features, marred and writhed by the sharp agony of one mortal moment ! She knows nothing, she sees nothing but this. The crimson is staining her robe. Above her stands a man with folded arms, who, after hesitating a moment, has thrown away a large American knife he held in his hand, a knife dripping, dripping with his rival's blood. She sees nothing of these things. And not a tear falls from her eye.

There was a sound of men running and shouting. The murderer looked up. Some of Lady Pilkington's party on their return, who had heard the shrieks. At their head, coming fast, was Jobson, who discerned that some fatality had happened, but never suspected the truth. A sound from the other side—Grenville, Barclay, Carington, coming swiftly. They guessed whose shrieks they had heard, for the General told them who had gone up the hill only twenty minutes since. The man did not try to flee. Jobson arrived first. Ten yards off he had taken in at a glance the whole scene. Knowing nothing of the tender passages between his sister and the dead, he could only suppose that she had been a chance spectator of a quarrel between two men. He seized her by her arms and endeavoured to extricate her from the body. To his horror, she shrieked more wildly than before, and threw her arms round the neck, round the lifeless neck. Tremmenheere and Grenville arrived together. Jobson did not see them. They divined in a moment what had happened, and without a word, and with a common impulse, they threw themselves on the guilty wretch and bore him to the ground. Had others not come up, they would have taken the craven life out of him there and then.

Sorrowful, heart-breaking scene, which no one can pen or paint. To get the little beauty away from the dead ; to restrain her from tearing out her silken hair ; to endeavour to soothe the fury of a tempestuous, maddened sorrow ; to bear her from the scene in gentle though strong arms, crying "Robin, Robin, my Robin !" and all without a tear. It wrung the hearts of those who saw it as they had never been wrung before.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

DOCTOR JOBSON, who had scarcely closed his eyes during the night, rose at five o'clock silently, without disturbing his wife. Throwing around him a loose cotton dressing-gown, he lit a candle, and went into Bertha's room. She had been brought back to Grenville's room the night before. It was the hour before dawn, the blackest hour of those tropical latitudes, and sometimes the most oppressive; but a slight breeze was already beginning to stir the air before the coming out of day, as if some electric movement had been imparted to the outer surface of the darkness by the impinging light.

She was lying on the little camp bedstead, the mosquito-netting thrown back, the cool, thin linen sheet cast negligently over part of her finely moulded form, stretched out there in virginal purity and beauty. The laced and embroidered nightdress, specimen of the skill of her own little fingers, hardly concealed the curved and rounded outlines of the maiden bosom, the contour of her exquisitely modelled shoulder, and of the arm thrown across her breast, the small white fingers of her hand nestling close to her heart. Her fine, brown silky hair, loose and dishevelled, was flung out over the pillow and the rail of the bedstead. On its surface the hesitating air wandering in through the jalousies played in gentle ripples. Her face was pale as the face of the dead, but the doctor's experienced eye, as he shaded the candle with his hand and glanced at her parted lips, told him that she was living. Presently she moved, and he watched for a few minutes with some anxiety the drawn-up nostrils, and the muttering lips, and the starting movement of the limbs, and hearkened to the low moans that seemed like voices from a far-off soul.

In moving, a single tear escaping from the long lashes, as if it had been held there since she closed her eyes, slipped over the exquisite contour of the pale cheek and disappeared—a flash of feeling from an unconscious heart, which had as yet refused to open its fountains to allay the insatiable thirst of sorrow.

Tears draw tears. When he saw it, out of the big doctor's eyes rushed the large drops, and he shook in an agony of sorrow. He could not restrain it. Standing there with the candle shaking in his hand, standing before the virgin beauty of his stricken sister, a rush of supernal forces carried away all the barriers of self-command, and flooded his soul with resistless grief.

Suddenly, her eyes opened ; she was lying on her left side, with her face towards him. There was no shock of alarm at the sight of him. She seemed to see him, and quietly to wonder. He set down the candle on the floor, and kneeling by the bedside, buried his great head in the end of the pillow and sobbed, not loudly, but deeply, as if his heart would break. She partly drew in near the wall, and leaning on her left arm, soothed his brow with her soft white fingers, and toyed with the hair which hung about it. Not a tear in her eye. She gazed at him steadfastly and said, speaking to herself—

“No, no, this is not Robin. He is over there where I told him to stay. He will do what I tell him. Arthur, Arthur, my dear brother Arthur! What has hurt you, Arthur? What is the matter? Why are you crying, Arthur, tell me, dear?”

She could not see his face. She kissed his temple. He hardly heard or noticed her. Her eyes were dry ; wide open, beautiful, lustrous eyes, watching him wonderingly.

“Arthur!” she cried, “Arthur!” She put her hand on his shoulder, and gave it a convulsive grip. “You are crying for somebody. Oh! *perhaps somebody is dead.*” She put her finger on her lip and checked herself. “Hush! I ought not to have said it. It is a terrible word. It pains him. Some one he loves—gone! Who is it, dear?”

By this time, Jobson had begun to recover some control of his feelings, and he became aware that she was talking.

He glanced up quickly at her face, on which the flaring candle sent up from the floor a weird, unearthly light. He looked more intently, and his soul sank within him with a horror worse than that of death.

"Oh, there are your eyes, Arthur, at last! How red—how red! Poor fellow! Have you done crying? Have you wept enough now, dear? Tell me what it is, Arthur—tell me *who* it is!"

Her eyes suddenly turned towards the door, and she shrank back. "Ah! look, look! are there two shadows walking, walking over there? Can you not see? No, there is only one. *Hush!* It has been there all night. It is Robin—but I would not let him come near. I told him to stay over there, you know—poor fellow, he looked so sad. There! Don't you see him now? Where is *your* shadow, dear? Oh, see!"

Uttering a piercing shriek, she fell back in a swoon.

Mrs. Jobson stood in the open doorway, relieved against the black background of the gloomy passage. Jobson started from his knees. She saw his face: it was the most terrible thing she had ever seen in her life. Features she loved so much, features so noble and almost divine, features generally so winning and so calm, wrung and troubled by a grief such as only strong men feel, even as though the chill hand of the destroying Angel had smitten it. Marian felt a thrill of anguish dart through the centre of her soul. But Marian was a quick, brave woman. She had glanced at the bed and seen the motionless form laid out there. She threw her arms round his neck for an instant, and kissed him, and then said briskly, with command in her tone—

"Arthur, Arthur! Tell me what to do! Do you not see? She has fainted. Why, she is very ill—quick!"

The sharp clear words roused him. In one step he was at the bedside, had drawn the fair form down, had felt the pulse and heart, and tried to push his finger between the close-shut teeth.

"My case, Marian, a cup, and some lint. I will bleed her. Bring your salts. I wish to God," he said to himself, as his wife went out, "there were nothing worse than this."

At length, after a long, long time, they brought her round to consciousness, and she lay there flaccid and still, breathing painfully, but not opening her eyes. The doctor went away and mixed an opiate. She took it from his hand and drank it off, and was soon asleep. Then he dressed and went out to his work, a beaten man. He had hardly spoken to Marian. She read too much in his face to need to say anything to him.

Mechanically crossing the parade, in a sort of dream, to visit some patients in the hospital, he met Major Barclay and Grenville, who were, indeed, lying in wait for him. They had been up most of the night, profoundly moved, especially the elder, by the terrible event of the preceding day.

When the Major saw the doctor's face he whispered to Grenville—

"Leave it to me, boy—don't you speak. Jobson," he said, in a grave voice, "I hope you have no bad news to give us? I hope the little girl has borne the shock pretty well—eh, Jobson?"

The old man's voice broke, and his eyes began to twitch.

"Eh, Jobson?"

The doctor, dazed and anguished, looked at them without saying a word. Then he made a violent effort, as they could see.

"Oh! My sister, Barclay? How kind of you to think of her! Ah! yes—much shaken, as was to be expected—much shaken. She has been ill, but I left her asleep."

"Thank God!" growled Barclay.

"Thank God!" piped little Grenville.

"Jobson, I have charge of this affair," said the elder, blowing his nose, and managing surreptitiously to brush the bandana across his eyes. "There must be an inquest, you know, and I have arranged it for eight o'clock. It is now six and a quarter," consulting his big gold repeater, relic of a bygone century. "The post-mortem will be held in half an hour. To avoid paining you with personal attendance, I have sent for Dr. McCombie, the Bridgetown senior, a very good man, as you know. Unhappily, there can be no

question as to the cause of death, and the certificate is only a matter of form."

"No, no, Major Barclay," said Dr. Jobson, laying his hand on the other's arm. "There is no necessity for that. I am strong enough to go through with my duty, whatever it may be. Nay, I insist on it. I should not like the certificate to go home in another man's name."

"Well, well, so be it," growled the Major, seeing that argument was useless. "But now about the inquest. Opens at eight. Hem! hem! You see she—you know—must attend as a witness."

The doctor drew back, stricken with horror.

"As a witness! Good God!"

Barclay caught him by the arm, and waved to young Grenville a signal to go away. When the younger one was out of hearing—

"Jobson," said the Major, gently as he could. "my dear boy, something is the matter. What has happened to the little girl? You said she was sleeping. Gracious heaven! she is not, not—eh?—you know—eh?"

"No," replied Jobson, gloomily. "Better dead than what she is, Barclay."

The Major staggered back, and put his hand to his head. It was as if the heart, steady and strong as a rock, had split.

"O my poor friend! O my little *mignonne*!"

Then he took Jobson's arm and they walked away, without a word, the two great hearts pulsating together, straight out over the grass of the parade, which neither of them could see.

Little Grenville, dodging about after them like a spaniel, watched them with a heart full of forebodings.

"Ah," he soliloquised. "I would give a thousand pounds and let him have her to-day, and no jealousy on my part, if I could bring poor Broomhall back.

'Robin, Robin!' who can ever forget that? And now, what's this game? Jobson looks like death. That's not for Broomhall only. And the Major there, he's awfully cut up. Ha! By Jove, it's the little beauty. He said she was sleeping, didn't he? I know. *She's dead*—that's what's up—she's dead!"

This thought breaking in upon the little man's brain with overwhelming suddenness, completely upset it. He took out his handkerchief, and mopping his eyes, set out to run after the retreating figures.

"Stop ! stop !" he shouted.

They turned round and he came up panting, his face running with tears and heat.

"Tell me," he gasped. "She is not dead, is she? You don't mean she is dead?"

Jobson was touched, and it did him good. He took the Honourable's hand and pressed it warmly. This sympathy was so real and manly that it acted like a soothing draught.

"No, Grenville. I can assure you her life is in no danger. But she is very ill. Don't ask me any more now. Thank you for your kindness. It is impossible she can attend the inquest ; we must arrange it otherwise. You two go on to the hospital. I will step in and send for my case and let us get this sad business over. Thank you both again, I can never forget this. God bless you !"

CHAPTER IX.

A STARTLING APPARITION.

IN the afternoon the whole garrison turned out to bury Broomhall with military honours. A favourite with the commander, with his brother officers, with his men, the tragic and romantic circumstances of his death awakened a universal feeling of sorrow and softened every heart. To all, from the General downwards, the ceremony was more than a mere duty. Men marched with unfeigned solemnity after the body, which the day before they had seen in the strength and perfection of life, as if in the hope that the manifestation of their sympathy might somehow reach and soothe the dead. So great was the horror excited by the crime that the General had been asked by the Governor to set a military guard over the prison in which the murderer was confined, to prevent the mob from anticipating the action of justice.

As they stood round the grave, the thoughts of all went out to the young girl whose story of life had now become interwoven with the memory of the dead. Nothing had been allowed to transpire as to her condition. Was she seriously ill? Would she soon join him on the undiscovered shore? Such were the thoughts pervading the assembly.

Major Barclay, the General, and her brother were the only three persons present who knew the fate that had befallen her. An apology had been made for her absence from the inquest. The doctor had certified her unfit to appear to give evidence, and the whisper went round that she was dangerously ill; but only those three understood the truth.

So they buried him; the creature of dashed hopes—his own, his mother's, his lover's, his friends', dashed in a moment by the assassin blow—buried him with words of a

hope eternal. And at those wonderful words, so solemn and so majestic, strong men looking down into the pure white grave dug in the chalk, felt their hearts throbbing with an indefinite expectation, like that of the husbandman who burying the grain from sight, foresees the waving ripeness and the golden wealth of the harvest to come.

The funeral over, the civilians quietly dispersed. The black mob lining the roads to listen to the accustomed music, which for them always made of a funeral a holiday event, were disappointed. For men and officers marched home in silence, the band carrying their instruments over their shoulders. The painful solemnity of the death had struck too deeply into their hearts to be played away with military jigs and waltzes.

Doctor Jobson went back to his quarters and threw off his uniform. Bertha had slept long and peacefully: and when he stepped into her room a moment and looked at her, she was lying awake, quiet and listless, a half-smile on her lips—only on her lips, the rest of the face was sorrow-stricken—and in her eyes that dreadful nothing, which had seemed to him in the morning to be worse than the lifeless nothingness of death. Then he went back to the parlour, and overcome by fatigue and care, threw himself on the lounge. Marian encouraged his rest, fanned him, bathed his head with Florida water, and, to keep him calm, sat by his side. Presently they both dozed, and so more than two hours passed away. Then came Bathsheba, summoning her mistress to the nursery, where our hero, Master Jobson, too much neglected amid all these sad occurrences, was making his wants known in a peremptory manner peculiar to his years.

"Bathsheba," said Mrs. Jobson, "step into Missy Bertha's room and see how she is. Take a light with you."

The negress had not been gone two minutes when she was back again, with eyes and mouth wide open and general symptoms of alarm.

"O Missy Berty no dere! De bed quite empty—all de clothes spilt round de room!"

Marian, without a word, handed over Master Jobson, protesting bitterly, and ran into Bertha's apartment.

The report of the negress was too true. There was the bed, the form still impressed on the mattress and pillow, but the tenant had flown. The trunks, hastily brought in from Queen's House the night before, had been opened. Bertha's things were scattered about in strange confusion. She was not to be seen. Marian called loudly for her husband.

* * * * *

That evening the mess-room of the 159th was gloomy enough. The brightest spirits found it impossible to rise above the general heaviness. No one seemed inclined to try to break the spell of melancholy which had fallen over the whole garrison. As the men dropped into the parlour, waiting for dinner, they exchanged monosyllables, or stood round gloomy and silent. The sherry and bitters that stood on the table rapidly and significantly disappeared. At such times, when men have nothing else to do, they are prone to drink. There is nothing more remarkable than the avidity with which the mourners at a Scotch funeral, after gazing at the ground in deathlike silence for a lengthened space of time, pounce upon the maid who comes in with the waiter laden with sherry and port.

Dinner was served at the usual hour, and men went at their soup with the air of people resigning themselves to poison. Fish, joints, sweets mechanically came, were mechanically eaten, and the courses withdrawn almost in silence, with unwonted rapidity. All the younger fellows drank deeply. The elders sipped their wine and awkwardly tried to pass some talk with their neighbours, but words seemed to stick in their throats. The wine, however, soon began to unloose some tongues. Avoiding the subject of all thoughts, they discussed as widely as possible things long past and far away. Gradually some approach to cordiality was beginning to appear on the surface of the company.

Suddenly there was an exclamation.

The room was a long one, with doors at each end. One of these doors opened on the parlour, at the other side of which was the exit leading to the corridor of the officers' quarters. The mess-room door had been left open to admit any air that was going. Every eye followed the look of the

officer who made the exclamation, and there in the doorway, pale as a lily, but as lustrous and as beautiful, dressed to the minutest particular, just as she had been dressed on the night of the Governor's ball, stood Bertha Jobson. Every man's heart leaped within him, and every one, uttering some half-suppressed exclamation, rose to his feet.

Her eyes, strangely brilliant, travelled inquiringly round the table from face to face, a slight smile playing over her pale features. Presently her glance rested on a chair next to Grenville's—an empty chair. It had been carelessly laid by the servant, and no one liked to ask to have it removed, though Grenville had muttered to his neighbour that "it was doosid uncomfortable to have that empty thing there."

As she looked at the unfilled space her eye grew brighter, and she glided forward a few steps, curtsying as she came and looking radiant as an angel.

Horror-stricken, they all bowed—bowed and watched her. Only old Barclay stepped out, as if to stop her.

"Good evening, gentlemen!" she said.

When they looked again at her face they all shuddered.

"You are surely dining late? Are you not going to the ball? I have been waiting so long for—for—Rob—Captain Broomhall. He promised to come for me—to go with us. We were all to go together. I am quite tired of waiting. Why—why—*Where is he?*"

She gazed round the room, examining face by face, each man shrinking as the luminous eyes met his, till she came again to the empty chair. Then a shadow flitted across her brow, which assumed a dreadful expression of grief, as she clasped her gloved hands.

"*Gone!*"

She would have fallen had not old Barclay supported her.

Grenville rushed forward to help the Major.

"Go back, sir," cried the old man, peremptorily. "Not a man leave his place. This is no work for you, young man. Hem! Take my arm, Miss Jobson. He has not come yet; we will go and look for him."

Her face brightened up for an instant, and she looked round smilingly on the company.

“Oh!” she said, “I am so sorry I have troubled you all. Stay!” breaking away from the Major, and gazing intently on the faces of those nearest to her. “What are you all crying for? O—O, I know!” She clasped her hands over her heart, as if a sharp, swift pain had gone through it. “O my God, I see it now.”

At this moment in came poor Jobson, hastily, like a man bereft of wits, his dress and hair in disorder. He saw no one—no one but his sister.

He and the Major gently took her up, gently, silently, and bore her away.

The men, afraid to look into each other's faces, blanched and wet with emotion, melted away from the room, went off without even a whisper; some to pace the parade in the darkness, some to their rooms, and all to pray, “God help the little beauty!”

CHAPTER X.

THE DOCTOR SHOWS SIGNS OF INSANITY.

ON the fortunes or misfortunes of our young Jobson the crime of Fullarton exerted a deep and lasting influence. The trail of blood runs on through lives and generations. Murder alters the current of many a life which is distantly related to the one cut off; and so our baby hero, like his innocent aunt, was destined to suffer some of the salt and bitter consequences of that foul outrage upon Nature. Of all inhuman outrages, how is it that the spilling of blood seems ever to leave the direst and most ineffaceable stains upon human existence? Other crimes there are, foul, revolting, and against Nature as outrageous; but the sin of Cain still brands with marks more lasting, and scatters influences more powerful, than all the rest. For the blood of a man, God's image, destroyed by a man, his brother, the natural and appointed agent or minister of mercy to his fellow-man, "*cries up!*" and heaven and earth hear the cry.

Nothing could dispel the gloom thrown over the garrison and society of the island by Broomhall's death and Bertha's sorrow. Fullarton had received the supreme penalty, all that man could exact. The great influence of his friends was unable to save him. The whole community was carried away with detestation of his vulgar and abominable crime. Day after day their indignation was revived and sustained by a sad reminder. The General's wife, sitting straight and proud in her phaeton, but with her face clouded by anxiety, could be seen giving an airing to her pretty *protégée*, whose features no longer lighted up with fascinating and mischievous intelligence, when some garrison beau turned towards them with uplifted hat. Her eyes gazed vacantly before her, and her lips, painfully compressed,

scarcely opened to reply to the remarks with which Lady Pilkington sometimes tried to draw the soul out of its dark retreat. The clear-cut face of the General's wife would look pale and anxious, spite of her efforts at self-command.

Behind, in the rumble, instead of the tidy negro, sat Doctor Jobson, arms crossed, his face too shadowed, his eye always keenly watching every movement of the little form before him, sometimes leaning forward to exchange a word with Lady Pilkington, or to listen to anything that might fall from Bertha. Many a time the sharp-eyed lady detected an officer in the distance, who, catching sight of the approaching horses, would turn out of the way, and get behind some tree or house, to steal a glimpse unseen of the fair wreck, over which not a few hearts were aching with pity.

Bertha seemed to live in a dream. She was perfectly quiet and manageable as an infant. After the scene in the mess-room, they fancied that she showed signs of having apprehended more clearly and painfully than before the nature of the terrible incident which had occurred. She never mentioned Robin. The only thing she seemed to like was to sit with little Thaddæus in her lap, rocking him gently, and gazing into his eyes, which, alas ! in their pure intelligence so much resembled her own. Unnoticed by her, they watched her. Marian, taking up the burthen without a murmur, gave herself up to the duty of lavishing kindnesses which were received with mere passivity. Only Lady Pilkington and the Doctor and little Thaddæus could bring any approach to a smile on Bertha's sorrow-stricken features, and it was like sunshine playing over a marble mask.

During this distressful period, which everyone felt to be growing intolerable, one man behaved in a manner to give some anxiety to his comrades, Major Grenville seemed to have become a different person. The change indeed was startling. The morning circle for brandy and bitters knew him no more. At the bi-weekly whist and cribbage club, which met at Government House and one or two other places, the absence of their keenest and wildest player was the subject of wondering comment. The old wooden billiard-table at the club no longer resounded with his nervous strokes, or

the room with his sharp exclamations, as he called the numbers to the boy, or rated that lazy youth for stupidity or inattention. On the other hand, the little Major began to give strict regard to his military duties. He shunned society. He excused himself from as many entertainments as he decently could. When he did go out he was unwontedly silent and *distract*. To cap the general astonishment, he took to attending the Cathedral with exemplary regularity, and brushing the dust off his prayer-book, gave the responses with extraordinary fervour and distinctness. A rumour was started in the mess that he had consulted the chaplain, and sought a private interview with the bishop, a noted evangelical. These things, although they were canvassed with some humour among his brother officers, were not treated with ill-natured derision. It was a token of the depth to which all had been moved by late events, that Grenville's remarkable conduct was visited with no malicious sarcasm, even by the most worldly or cynical of his circle.

This was the state of affairs, when, one day early, about eight weeks after the picnic, Doctor Jobson walked quietly up to Queen's House, after morning parade. He found the General seated in the large library on the left of the hall, at a great table covered with books, maps, and despatches. When Jobson's face appeared at the open door, Sir William Pilkington, instead of giving him the usual familiar nod of welcome, rose, and taking Jobson's hand kindly pressed it as he motioned him to a seat beside him.

"Sir William," began the doctor, softening under the influence of the delicate sympathy the General had evinced, "I have come to tell you something which I know will be as painful to you as it is to me, but which late—late events have forced me to resolve upon. To be short, I mean to retire from the army."

"Eh? Jobson, 'retire from the army!' Why what has brought you to this? How can you possibly do it? What alternative have you? You are a young man yet. You like the regiment. You have, I can tell you, capital prospects——"

"Very true, my dear friend," said Jobson, laying his hand on the General's arm. "But—this—this horrible

affair has upset my whole life. It has thrown a cloud over the garrison."

"Yes," replied Sir William. "But that is no reason for abandoning your post. It is a sorrowful case, and we all deeply feel with you. Only do not wildly go and throw away your chance in life for that. You have a son, remember."

"Ay! I have not forgotten that, Sir William," said Doctor Jobson. "If I could possibly remain here I would. But my view of duty is clear and I think it cannot be gain-said. So long as I could conscientiously nurse the slightest hope that my sister's affection was curable I felt bound to stick to my post, painful as it was, in the circumstances, to carry on my duties. But General," continued Jobson, heaving a fresh sigh and regarding the General with steady eyes, "I am now satisfied, after many weeks of close examination, that poor little Bertha's case is, for the present at all events, hopeless. It will only yield, if it ever yields, to years of patient, loving treatment, applied by one mind and carried out under one direction."

"Don't you think, Jobson," said the General gently, his eye not looking straight into Jobson's and with some hesitation in his tone. "Could you not—think you—arrange—ahem!—"

"No, sir," interrupted Jobson. "Forgive me. I know what you would say. I cannot send her home—not even to my father's house. I could not return her a wreck, among her brothers and sisters, to be thrown upon my father's care. Skilful as he is, he is old. He would be obliged to send her—elsewhere. And that I could never bear the thought of. It is out of the question. There is only one thing for it," said Dr. Jobson, standing up. "I must devote my life to her. I shall throw up my appointment and go to Canada."

"But—bless my soul!—my dear Jobson?" cried Sir William. "This is very sudden, you know, very serious; marvellously self-sacrificing and plucky, but don't you think now, a little, just a little, Quixotic! Think of your wife and your boy there. All their lives changed for this. Nothing definite before you. Going off into the wilderness

as it were, and throwing away a good position and a fair prospect of promotion. Do you think you will be doing right, eh?"

"Sir William," replied Doctor Jobson, "I have thought over all that."

"And what does Mrs. Jobson say?"

"Of course, sir, I have consulted her. She sees eye to eye with me, and is quite willing to incur the sacrifice and the risk, whatever it may be."

"God bless me," cried the General in a flurry, "and your wife has gone mad too."

Jobson winced. The General jumped up in a moment and seized his hand, and spoke earnestly—

"Forgive me, a thousand pardons, forgive me, my dear fellow. It was a thoughtless word."

He paced the room up and down, and came back to where Jobson was standing.

"You are a noble pair, worthy of each other, and Heaven will reward you for this. I agree with you that your poor sister could not remain in this place. It was becoming too painful to all of us. And, on consideration, I respect the motives which deter you from sending her home to England in her present state. Yes! Perhaps it is best! Let us go and talk to Lady Pilkington about it. I can give you some very good letters to Canada—but Jobson, what the devil are we to do for a doctor?"

CHAPTER XI.

GOOD-BYE.

LITTLE recked the infant Jobson of the bustle, the excitement, the heart-achings, the manly and generous kindness, the feminine tears and sympathies, amid which he embarked on board the packet, bound for New York, which was ironically called the "Velox." What was it all to him, conscious only of a frenzy of lacteal appetite about every two hours, which made him a chronic nuisance, endured however with a loving hope little likely to be justified. What knew he of the slovenly brigantine lying out in the sun-bright roadstead? What of the light breeze that blew out the pennant and gave promise of at least an auspicious start? What of the shore, crowded with soldiers and civilians, and the pier monopolised by officers and officials, all come to say "God bless you," to Doctor Jobson and his popular wife? And what knew he of the pale young girl, whose beauty had of late taken an exquisitely fragile and refined character, and who seemed not even to see, certainly not to feel the motion of the excitement around her? Yet Master Jobson, had he been mentally wide-awake, and reflective, could not but have understood how grave an influence on his life this young girl's fate was exerting; on how doubtful a future it was now embarking his precious self and his precious progenitors in that dull brig. 'Tis most unfortunate that the luxury of being drifted along without an atom of care or responsibility for the results, is only granted at a time when the enjoyment cannot be appreciated.

When the godmother and godfather of the little boy had kissed his soft cheek, and handed him back to Bathsheba, who spite of the sultry weather had apparently mounted her whole wardrobe on her body in one lot as the readiest way of carrying it, they turned to the rest of

the interesting little group for which the garrison gig was waiting, Grenville, in full uniform at the tiller. The General offered his hand and bowed his head to Marian, and then to Bertha, who laid a cold hand in his, and then catching sight of Lady Pilkington, on whose face the traces of emotion were sparkling as she turned from her warm embrace of Marian to kiss the little beauty, she ran to her. The other members of the party instinctively turning away left the two for a moment.

“Good-bye, dear, God help you. Good-bye!”

Bertha looked into Lady Pilkington’s face, and a sudden gleam of intelligence flashed from her eye. She caught her friend by the hand.

“Oh,” she said, “you loved him too. You are crying for him. I cannot cry. He is always with me—always. See, he is sitting in the boat waiting for me—there!—but, oh! why has he that terrible pale face, and that blood on his coat!”

Marian had spoken quickly, and the doctor had caught swift hold of Bertha’s arm, and he and the General held the weak slight form gently, but securely, before she could run more than a step or two towards the deep bright water. Wrapping a light shawl round her to impede her movements, Sir William and Jobson lifted her into the gig, and sat on either side of her, and so guarded her until she was safe in the cabin. With sorrowful eyes as the ship weighed anchor and bore slowly away, did those on shore watch the white handkerchief which Marian flew out from the bulwarks in response to the crowd, all standing bareheaded in solemn silence, without a cheer, but with many a sign of tender sympathy. One little incident took place at the foot of the ladder, as they were about to lift the infant Jobson up.

“Mrs. Jobson,” said Major Grenville, “may I kiss the youngster?”

And having obtained leave, and gallantly performed the unusual office, and after looking at Bathsheba as if his feelings might have enabled him to carry through a similar compliment to her, the Major turned to where the two watchful forms were uniting their arms round Bertha’s slight figure.

"Jobson," he said, trembling with anxiety and emotion, "would you mind—do you think I might just shake hands with *her*—it would be a great satisfaction to me? I—I should always remember it."

The General looked hard into Grenville's eyes, and whether he read something there that was strange, or whether his own manly heart felt some little sympathy with the unwonted ingenuousness of the younger man, I know not; but he looked across to the doctor, and said kindly—

"If you thought there was no harm in it, I am sure it would please him, Jobson."

"Good-bye," said Major Grenville in a stifled voice, as he took the small hand which, released from its wrappings, he was allowed to seize for a single instant, and giving it a slight pressure, he staggered back to the stern sheets, and remained there gazing steadily into the water without another word. It was not until they were half-way back, and he became aware that the General was speaking to him, that Grenville, lifting up his eyes, was able to wave his hand in a final adieu to Marian and Jobson on the quarter-deck.

CHAPTER XII.

FRESH SCENES AND FAMILIAR FACES.

SLOWLY had the long years gone by with little Thaddæus Jobson, tended still, though now along with others, by faithful Bathsheba ; agonising with the hard, insistant teeth, painful sprouters from coral soil of tender gums : coughing and wheezing through the misty atmospheres of influenza ; crossing the doubtful marshes of the measles ; and once wrestling with death on the fiery field of scarlet-fever : all this until between seven and eight years of age he appears before us, jacketed and trousered in Canadian grey homespun, a chubby-cheeked boy, large-eyed, curly-headed, too active, perhaps, but gentle and imaginative withal. A comforter surrounding his neck, in his mittened hand a string which drags along a smooth-running little sled over the bright, hard-beaten snow, he puffs out little jets of grey steam into the clear, bright cold sunlight. On his small feet we descry a pair of gay moccasins Indian-worked, which as he runs along yield no sound save the crisp soft crackle of the crystal snow.

By his side, dressed in a homespun skirt of thick wool, with a jacket or half-cloak of fur, and a small fur cap jauntily set above her brown hair, walks a woman of about twenty-five, whose smooth cheek glows in the bracing air, and whose firm step and easy motion indicate unburdened youth and continual exercise. Loose tresses escape from under the fur cap, and now and then with a light laugh she will call the little Taddy—lucky nickname, invented no one can now remember how or by whom—and running away from him with swift and noiseless feet, she will turn and watch the wee man valiantly struggling with his sled and the slippery perils of the ice, and when at last tumbling headlong, the impulsive sleigh knocks him a painful dig in

some soft part, and he rises discomfited, she catches him round the neck and smothers his cold face with kisses, and setting him on his sled again runs off with it and him laughing merrily.

This play with Taddy is all that Bertha does indicating any interest in the life around her. To all except him she is silent and restrained. She likes the Doctor to come and take her hand in his, and press her head and cheek against his bosom, and kiss her ivory forehead. At such times, her dark eyes, from which alas ! that strange, wondering look has never passed away, will grow more soft, and now and then a tear distilled will dash over the cheek, but when Jobson says, "What is it, dear?" there is no answer, but a long gaze out, out into the unseen—a gaze which he in vain strives to follow.

Presently the two, Taddy and Bertha, turn to the left, down a bend of the road, which leads to a broad, white, block-ribbed river. The drifting fields of ice, broken away in early winter from upper lakes and smooth bays of the great stream, and becoming jammed, have been hurled by the enormous force of the current pell-mell on each other in vast masses, which at last have become so packed and welded together that they span the river from shore to shore, and its dark, deep, circling waters rush down beneath. Hark ! If you listen a moment you become conscious of a dull, steady noise coming from afar through the motionless air. Not many miles above them, the vast body of one of the greatest streams in the world rolls down tumultuous through and over huge rocks in roaring cascades, with leaping and hissing waves, white and wrathful—a scene of passionate strife, and of an eternal voice of the waters, uttering some of Nature's grandest tones. We shall see again those terrifying waters, whose deep roar is scarcely noticed by the accustomed ears of Taddy and Bertha. Far and wide the flaming sun glitters on virgin white, here transforming the skeleton trees into vast coralline forms, and there where the snow has mantled the high cone-shaped firs, with their drooping branches, producing the effect of airy pagodas, green beneath and tent-white above ; a wonderful sun, dazzling to the eye, exhilarating to the

brain ; while the dry air, like a fine ether, quickens every sense, and makes the blood course wildly through the veins. Not a speck of cloud floats in the blue canopy above, where the eye *rests* as it looks upwards because it seems to reach into an illimitable space. Thither how often does Bertha's sweet face turn and her gaze wander with a deep, wondering inquiry, and then, as she withdraws it, a sad smile flits across her features, and she is back again with Taddy, laughing and smiling, but saying hardly a word. To this Taddy has become quite used. Garrulous, even to inconvenience with Bathsheba or his mother Marian, now possessing five other infant cares to divide her affections, he has fallen in with the ways of his beautiful aunt, and yields himself up body and soul to the spell of her humours. She is different from every one else ; she subdues him by her beauty and her strange, pensive manners. A singular sympathy has sprung up between them. He does not need to speak to her. She need not speak to him. He reads more in her smile than he gathers from a dozen sentences elsewhere. By a magnetic impulse her temper at once affects him. If she is thoughtful and silent, he walks beside her, glancing sidewise, quiet, happy, but grave and pensive too. If she is in a romping mood, forthwith all the spirit of the little man wakes up and shakes itself out of him. Loudly they laugh together, tossing their arms about and, like two children as they are, babbling nonsense between their outbursts of fun. Thoughtful Doctor Jobson, now one of the leading physicians of Canada, slyly watching the development of this strange affection, had for a while grave anxiety about it. He was afraid the natural sympathy between the two might throw across the boy's mind some of the cloud that overshadowed that of his aunt. But, watching closely, he saw, what struck him very much, that through Taddy alone could any influence be brought to bear on Bertha. Taddy's mind, infantile and undeveloped, was stronger than hers, and strange to say, only Taddy appeared able to change or vary her humours. This once settled, the Doctor let the intimacy run on unchecked, and so for years the two had been inseparable.

They arrive at a bank of the river, high and gently sloping down towards the road, that here strikes out to cross the bridge of ice over to the island, which constitutes for a couple of miles the opposite bank. And here the little Taddy, with a joyous shout, throwing the string on the top of the painted sled, and laying a firm left hand on the bar which joins the two runners at the front, or bow, and then sitting on his left hip with the leg well tucked in under him, leaving the right leg swinging free to act as rudder, launches off boldly from the top, Bertha clapping her hands as a signal and encouraging him with an "Off! Taddy." Once launched on that perilous course, the smooth-runnered sled acquiring fresh momentum at every yard, swiftly glides, the little leg behind now moving to right, now to left, as the quick eye of the boy sees a turn to be made or a danger to be avoided, and behind him rises a light cloud of powdery snow. Silent now in everything save the slight ring of the polished iron, as he presses his teeth tightly together and gathers all his wits to the trial, and Bertha anxiously watches the fortunes of the descent. It is rapid, but full of incidents. Here lies in the road a ridge, indicating below a fallen branch. It is one of the known hazards of the drive. A trembling or unskilful youth, tempting that treacherous baulk, and striking it at an improper angle, will find his sled whirled round with an eddying turn that flings him twenty feet into the snow, if indeed it do not dash him and the sleigh together on down the steep, hard-beaten hill with damage to limb and runner. But our little Taddy, with starting eyes, goes at the danger he cannot now avoid, and, deftly swinging that dexter leg at the right moment, charging straight at the obstacle, and holding on with all his might, his sled jumps up into the air five feet or more like a thing of life, and coming down fairly again some paces further down, resumes its lightning career, Taddy drawing a long breath as he finds himself running for a few seconds smoothly over the slippery surface. But here again, towards the foot of the hill, where the road turns out towards the ice, lies a second hazard. The sleighs of the farmers, coming by a more gradual descent and along the river side, are here wont to turn off sharply

to the road across the river. Consequently the twisting runners have gradually dug out a hole broad and deep, a vast trench directly in the boy's way, technically termed a "cahoe," which there is no avoiding, for on the left there is Scylla in the shape of a huge, branchless tree, from time immemorial the marking place of the river crossing—and on the other Charybdis: a pile of rock-like ice, sharp and jagged, against whose edges if Master Taddy should come with his frail bark, he and it would arrive at irremediable grief. So once more drawing breath and pursing his lips and grasping tightly the front and side of his strange wooden steed, the boy charges the "cahoe" with terrible velocity. If he is to be saved and carried home to his mother breathing, his vehicle must jump from the upper edge of that yawning gulf, and never deviating, leap across the intervening space, and land on the other side fairly and squarely, both runners touching the ground at the same moment, the rider never blenching or moving to disturb the balance, and sitting, ready to relieve himself from the shock of the sudden thud upon the ice beyond. Nobly done, Master Taddy! Holding himself together, boy and sledge have leaped the perilous gulf, and now the sled, smoothly gliding along the level, all danger passed, Taddy throws himself forward to aid the spent force and carry his glassy runners to the farthest possible point.

"Hurrah!" He waves his hand, and his little piping voice reaches his aunt, who has been watching the brave descent with a quickened pulse.

"Hurrah!" And her hand waves to the tiny speck below a triumphant signal.

And now with string thrown over his shoulder Taddy begins to breast the hill, up the zig-zag track the boys have made to ease the long return, resolved to try once more the alluring dangers of the slide.

Meantime from the road a figure has approached Bertha, who looking round and seeing it, as if it were familiar, gives no sigh either of welcome or distaste. It is that of a short man, dressed in one of the Indian blue blanket coats, reaching below the knees: trimmed with scarlet at the cuffs

and neck, and along the seams ; a blue capuchon, scarlet-lined, hanging from the neck ; a bright-coloured sash round his waist ; on his head a sealskin cap. His trousers of light-grey cloth, tucked into a handsome pair of moccasins. Behind him, by a strip of hide carelessly thrown over his arm, he drags a toboggin, or Indian sleigh, framed of thin wood, six or seven feet long, turned up at one end and sewn together with gut or hide. A short-stemmed meerschaum completes the picture. We have to look twice before we recognise in this figure, with a grey line here and there appearing in the soft whiskers and beard which still cover the lower part of his face, our former acquaintance, the Honourable Major Grenville. But it is he.

"Good morning, Miss Jobson," he says gently, while he lifts his cap after taking his pipe out of his mouth and putting it into a pouch by his side. She looks straight at him, but without any sign of special recognition, and without any token of dislike. He says nothing more, but waits quietly and deferentially, as if to see what she will do.

"Taddy is here," she says at length, pointing to Master T., who is labouring gallantly up the steep.

The Major only nods. He has studied her almost as closely as the doctor has done, and knows her whims and ways. He places his toboggin on the top of the crest ready to start, and then noticing how slowly Taddy makes way, he sets off running, with his light moccasins, down the zig-zag, until he reaches the brave infant.

"Jump on, Taddy ; your aunt is waiting. I'll pull you up."

Taddy with a quickness denoting an experienced intelligence, jumps on the sled, and the Major walks away with him.

"Taddy," says the Major, looking over his shoulder, "you get Aunty to take a ride with me on the toboggin, will you?"

The boy's eye lights up as he nods.

"Right, my hearty," he pipes forth laughing. The Major has taught him this little piece of impertinence, much to the scandalising of his mamma. Then he sits still, apparently reflecting. The Major puffs on up the hill.



"With eyes starting from his head, the Major eagerly follows the mad dance of the Indian sleigh and its precious contents."

Page 89, Book II.

Bertha is at the moment hidden from them by a shoulder of the crest.

"I say," cries the boy at length, having thought the matter out, "you take care Auntie doesn't get hurt, won't you?"

"Hurt!" says the Major in a deep, thrilling voice. "Hurt, my boy! God help me, I wouldn't hurt a hair of your aunt's head not for—for——"

"Not for all the 'baccy in the world?" interrupts Master Taddy. "You like 'baccy better than anything, don't you?"

Before the Major can answer he has turned the crest of the hill, and glancing before him he utters a loud shout, and darts off, leaving Taddy to his own resources. Taddy climbing quickly from the sleigh looks out. Aunt Bertie is sitting in the toboggin. She has thrown off her cap, and in her hand are the two sticks used for steering. At the Major's foolish shout she has turned round, she was only twenty yards away, and seeing Taddy, she throws up her hands and laughing merrily, pushes off the light machine and dashes down the hill. Taddy will never forget that moment—never in all his life. Quick as lightning he leaps from his sleigh and fast as his little legs can carry him catches up with the Major who is standing at the top of the hill, wringing his hands as with eyes starting from his head he eagerly follows the mad dance of the Indian sleigh and its precious freight. Taddy catching sympathy from the agony on the Major's face begins to cry. On darts the toboggin, safely taking a great leap over the first peril—the fallen branch, and now, nearing the bottom, where the Major knows the chief danger to lie, his excitement becomes anguish when he sees the frail thing, leaping into the air at the great cahoe, turn sidewise and throw its freight off far beyond the lefthand tree, thank God! but out of sight beyond it—into what? Down the steep hill like a madman, and at the danger of his own life, goes the Major, whether leaping or running he does not know, till he reaches the bottom. As for Master Taddy, starting to imitate the gallant officer, he misses his footing and rolls from top to bottom, with no further damage than the resulting sensation

of a brain going round like a windmill. When he staggers to his feet and looks around, there is Aunt Bertie, covered, like himself, with snow from head to foot, and shaking it out of her disordered tresses and rough costume, laughing merrily and loudly at the Major who is on his knees with his hands clasped, looking at her as if she were an angel.

"Aunty, Aunty !" screams Taddy, running up and catching her hand, "are you hurt?"

"No, no, no ! But look, Taddy, what's the matter with *him* ?" and she points to the Major.

Grenville, with a flush in his face, rises muttering, "Thank God ! thank God !" while Taddy says :

"O, he is praying because you are saved. Kiss me and say you are quite well."

"Quite well," she cries, stooping and kissing the child, and then she relapses into silence. Taddy taking her hand leads her along to the zigzag, looking at her narrowly out of his keen greyish eyes, but saying never a word. The Major sits down for a few minutes on a hulk of ice, and while he cleans out and refills his pipe watches the two ascending the hill.

"Thank God," he continues to mutter to himself.

Just as he has lit his pipe an idea flashes into his mind.

"By Jove," he cries, "she has left her cap at the top of the hill."

And seizing the thong of his toboggan he tears straight up the glassy slide, at a pace which sadly tries the vigour of his little legs, and when the two reach the top there he is waiting with Bertha's cap shaken free of the snow.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MAJOR TURNS UP AND OBJECTS TO BE TURNED OUT.

DOCTOR JOBSON had settled in Canada at the town of Cornwall, in that Province which used to be called Upper Canada, and is now called Ontario. Lying on the plateau about twenty-five feet above the level of the broad, deep, fast-flowing river, below the point where the surging and tempestuous torrent of the Long Sault—pronounced “Long Sue” by the neighbouring folk—begins to smooth its angry curls and to put on a milder and less ruffled face, Cornwall was a post chosen as the terminus of one link of the magnificent canals then being constructed the Government to carry large grain-laden vessels from the farthest bays of Lake Superior past the perilous rapids which here and there impede the navigation of the great river, thus helping them on towards the Gulf of the Saint Lawrence, two thousand miles from the starting point, and so to any part of Europe. It was expected in those days that Cornwall, the largest town of a fairly rich and populous district, would grow into a “city,” and people who credited themselves with a far-seeing judgment, were speculating in lots, of which at the moment there was an unlimited supply. As the town lay opposite to the boundary of the United States, only the river, divided into two wide deep forks by an island some two miles long, lying between, a small garrison was maintained at Cornwall. It had a custom-house and other evidences of advanced civilisation. It was an assize town. Its court-house was as large, as square, as ugly, as inconvenient, as that of any assize town in the old country. Therein, at stated intervals, the judge and sheriff, and all the familiar concomitants of “justice in eyre” at home, appeared; and before them pleaded barristers begowned; and the crier called out the ancient “O yes! O yes!” and all seemed most British and old-fashioned.

The criminals, however, and the crowd that thronged the room on these occasions were very different in their aspects from those of a Lincolnshire or Wexford court of justice. Dark, withered, tatterdemalion Indians, in dirty blanket coats and greasy sashes, and coarse moccasins, jostled with French, and Scotch, and Irish farmers or farm-servants or loungers. The French Catholic *curé*, his large three-cornered hat before him, could be seen offering snuff to the Rev. Doctor Troutbeck, the Dean of Toronto, who was incumbent of the parish church ; and even Mr. Macwaters, the Presbyterian minister, would condescend to take a pinch of the tawny dust, with his long, bony fingers, out of the box of the genial representative of the Scarlet Woman.

In the town and its neighbourhood there were not a few old settlers, traders, and farmers, descendants of well-born folk, of good education and manners, and generally in a prosperous condition. The counties of Stormont and Glengarry, especially the latter, swarmed with thrifty Scotch, the best of settlers. A whole clan—the Macdonalds—had emigrated to Glengarry, where Gaelic was the common tongue, and very little English was ever heard. Any one visiting the place, and looking at the red-haired denizens, and hearing their speech, and reading the names on the signs, or worshipping at the large square stone kirks wherein the Gaelic service is conducted, would think that this part of Canada was more Scottish than Scotland. And when Tugald the Red and Tonalld the Brown came forth of a summer's eve to champion at tossing the caber or putting the stone, while Tam blew the pipes, you might believe that the Canadian climate had not weakened the thews and sinews of these brawny Highlanders or spoiled their wind or tamed their fiery spirits.

Cornwall had been laid out on the platform before mentioned, which was as flat as a cricket-field. The streets, as the lines of territory were called to which the inhabitants had adjusted the fronts and boundaries of their scattered buildings, were broad and crossed at right angles. The town ran principally parallel with the river. Besides the custom-house and court, there were brick barracks for about two companies, some churches, a schoolhouse, and a

number of "stores," or shops, where almost every article of farm or household use might confidently be asked for. Ploughs, saddles, cutlery dry-goods, held their own alongside of sugar and coffee and jams and fish-hooks, and potash kettles, and coffins. The dealers were chiefly Scotch, which ensured that business would be well done, and the country, financially speaking, be milked to its last drop. Some of these storekeepers were not only men of intelligence, but of considerable means. They did a large trade, not a little of it for exportation by underground railroad across the border. As much as ten or twenty thousand pounds' worth of goods would be found at the "stock-taking" of one of these warehouses. The merchants exchanged for produce or speculated in it. Sometimes they acted as money-lenders to straitened colonists, until a vast part of the district lay under obligation to them, and the votes of the debtors were subject to their control.

The houses in Cornwall, some of them of brick and some of wood, and a few of stone, were generally roomy, land and wood being cheap. Many were surrounded with gardens, enclosed by small white palisades, within which in summer glowed bright fruits and brilliant flowers. In winter all was hidden deeply under the fleece of the woolly snow; while above, the latticed branches silvered with the frozen flakes, reflected the bright sun, or when the pale moon shed over them her sallow rays, seemed like ghastly skeletons of the dead summer.

On this scene then, and amidst this community, Doctor Jobson, learning in the course of his inquiries that an old Scotch medico, who could almost carry his memory back to the foundation of Cornwall, had after a gallant and prolonged struggle at length succumbed to old age and bad whisky, decided to fix his abode. Not without difficulty: Mrs. Jobson, dear soul, would be consulted on a matter so important. She had been attracted by Quebec. It was the seat of government. She liked its bold high headland, its elevated citadel, its houses and tin-roofed churches, and sharp high steeples, irregularly straggling down the hill, and the mighty sweep of the broad smooth river, where the

largest ships could lie at anchor eight hundred miles from sea. The Provincial Parliament and the garrison ensured some good society. A friend of hers was living there, in a charming little cottage, out near Montmorenci, where her husband had a saw-mill. Why not settle down at Quebec? Doctor Jobson liked the place too. He was fond of the picturesque. He took to the idea of being in a garrison town. But the husband of his wife's friend was a practical, shrewd man. He told Doctor Jobson in confidence that Quebec was altogether over-doctored—that there were “enough medicos there to kill all the inhabitants”—and that if he cared to succeed he should go further up.

“Take my advice, Doctor,” said Mr. Ennis. “Go to Upper Canada. Pick out a small town like Hamilton, or Kingston, or Cornwall, and fix yourself down there and don't move. The practice will come to you if you stick to it, and the place will always improve. The society won't be so good as that of Quebec or Montreal, but you will get good education for your boy, and a respectable competence for yourself.”

The doctor saw the wisdom of this advice, and at length obtaining Mrs. Jobson's consent, started on a tour meant to be one strictly of “inquiry.” But arriving on his return, after a wearisome failure, at Cornwall just in the nick of time, when old Doctor Macpherson had gone to look after his injured patients in their new sphere, and an epidemic of fever was luckily threatening to decimate the district, he took the Doctor's house, wrote to Mrs. Jobson to remain at Quebec until the epidemic was past, and, as he was fortunate in his cases, succeeded, notwithstanding the efforts of the only rival in the district, Doctor Skirrow, in seizing and keeping nearly the whole of the deceased physician's practice. Indeed, he seriously invaded Doctor Skirrow's circle, Jobson's fine appearance and gentle, open manners pleading in his favour with all the ladies, and, as he was a married man, not exciting any ill-feeling among the gentlemen. Mrs. Jobson, on hearing of these astounding arrangements, made him sorry by a letter, but it was of no use. The Doctor had agreed to take the house, and so when he came to Quebec for his family, Mrs. Jobson, after a week's

consideration, struck her colours, and was carried off in triumph.

Thus it is that we find the family of our hero's father, now quite at home in a big square wooden house in Cornwall, where Mrs. Jobson had in rapid succession added five little brothers and sisters to the Doctor's cares and to the future anxieties of Master Taddy. But Mrs. Jobson, though pleased with their success, had not taken kindly to Cornwall. In winter it was a flat, white, slow, uninteresting place. In summer it was very hot, and the mosquitoes were dreadful. Besides, one day they had been visited by an earthquake, which had frightened her into premature confinement; and on another occasion their house had caught fire accidentally and alarmed her into another, which convinced her that Providence had a spite against them for deserting Quebec. Indeed, Jobson was destined never to his dying day, or hers, to hear the last reproach for his presumptive promptness in adopting a home. When it ceased to become a grievance that was real, it was to be a grievance that was historical. An historical grievance is a terrible thing; it lasts so long after the circumstances have altered. Why should he not have waited? There were fifty places to choose from! What was the hurry? The leading doctor in Quebec might have died; some one might have retired; anything might have happened. Then everything seemed to go wrong. Kitty took measles. Whooping-cough invaded the family. Measles and whooping-cough were hardly ever heard of at Quebec. Here they were always prevailing, so Mrs. Mellowboy, that respectable monthly, said. She (Mrs. Jobson) had never had a day's health since her arrival in Cornwall—a not surprising affair, looking at the long list on the fly-leaf of the family Bible. These and similar criticisms the Doctor, working hard, with an increasing practice and occasional lucrative excursions to other towns whither his fame had begun to travel, bore with exemplary patience. He felt that something was due to Marian. He had not consulted her about Cornwall, and really those babies came very quickly. No wonder her nervous system was impaired. So he parried her thrusts with enviable good-nature, and

always felt in his conscience some twinges of guilt, which called for forbearance and repentance.

As we have seen, Bertha formed part of the Doctor's household. About that the Doctor and Marian were agreed. Deep down, Marian's soul was at one with the Doctor and his happiness. Her tempers were mere superficial disturbances, the outbreak of a keen, critical, clever nature, and like the upper curls and bubbleings of the current of the great deep river. Below, her affection ran on smooth, silent, and powerful. And she had never forgotten that morning at Bridgetown, when she had found the Doctor in Bertha's room. His manner, his dreadful face and look—they were an abiding picture on her memory. She shared with him all the sadness and anxiety of watching Bertha's life. No sacrifice which it involved to keep her with them ever called from Marian a word of bitterness or complaint. A mosquito with his tiny fleam might goad her to irritation; but not a mood or incident of Bertha's variable humours could ruffle Marian's temper. The Doctor noted this with a grateful tenderness.

They had been living at Cornwall nearly a year, and the rich bright colours of the Canadian autumn, and its delicious mellow climate, were reviving all their spirits just before the Arctic blasts of winter should begin to chill their blood, when one fine evening in October, the Doctor, with Marian on his arm, was waiting at the "Cornwall Arms" for the stage from St. Ann's, which they hoped would bring the English mail. The tin horn of the conductor had already been heard upon the road, and very soon the expected vehicle was seen coming along with a top-heavy lurch and infirm action. It was pulled by three horses driven unicorn, in shabby and much-mended harness, and with rough, uncombed skins, though they were very fair animals in point of breed and power. The vehicle was a long light wagon on high wheels, with waterproof curtains that drew up or down to suit the weather, and upon the top of its roof there were piled up many packages of light merchandise from Montreal. On the broad front seats beside the driver sat two gentlemen. One of these, in a travelling cap and drab cloak of many capes, as the coach drew up among a crowd

of loungers, looked towards Doctor and Mrs. Jobson, who were standing near the portico of the hotel, and immediately took off his cap to them.

"Why," said Jobson, scarcely believing his eyes "that is Grenville. What on earth brings him here?"

He was about to drop his wife's arm and run off to greet their friend when Mrs. Jobson held him tight.

"Stay, Jobson!" said she in his ear. "He has come to see about Bertha. Remember what Lady Pilkington said. Don't ask him to stay with us. You know the best bedroom is not furnished yet, and 'tis just as well."

"But what will he think?" cried the Doctor, seeing that the Major was disengaging himself from his cloak and preparing to descend. "You know he turned out of his room for us."

"No matter," answered Mrs. J. decisively. "It is impossible to put him up, and Bertha ought not to see him."

This last consideration had some influence on Jobson. He went forward to receive the Major. Marian followed. Both were beaming.

Grenville nearly rushed into their arms. His cordiality was almost embarrassing, though it did not go the length of embracing.

"My dear fellow! My dear Mrs. Jobson! How are you both?"

"Where have you sprung from?" they inquired in one breath, while in the next they expressed their pleasure at seeing him.

"Oh!" said the Major, getting grave, "I'll tell you all about it. How is Miss Jobson?"

The Doctor and his wife exchanged glances. They also looked grave. Marian shook her head.

"The same."

Major Grenville darted off to look after his baggage. Jobson went to secure him a room in the hotel. Number ten, first floor, large, tolerably well-furnished, with a long black stove-pipe passing in through one partition: turning sharp to the right, then to the left, then to the right again, and so through the opposite wall, near the corner. In that room the Major had lived now for more than six years, with

the rare exception of a few weeks each autumn given to shooting in the backwoods.

He dined that evening at the Doctor's, Bertha having been disposed of by Marian's management. They talked of old times, of the regimental fortunes, of military friends, of Lady Pilkington, who continued to keep up an animated correspondence with Marian. Grenville's manner was changed. Even the Doctor, who was not so keen as Marian, noticed it almost immediately. He was quieter, less garrulous, less flighty. He spoke with gravity, and they thought there was a sadness on his face. When tea had been served, the Major turned suddenly to Marian, and smiling, said :

"You must have been wondering all this time what brought me here. Well, I have left the regiment."

"Left the regiment !"

"Yes. Gone on half-pay. I have some little money besides, and so I have come away to look you up, and if you don't mind, I'll stay and live near you."

The Doctor and Marian looked aghast.

"Now," said Major Grenville, who had been watching them keenly, greatly to their amazement taking out his handkerchief and wiping his eyes, "my dear Jobson and Mrs. J., please don't say anything disagreeable, you know. Don't be angry. You don't know what I mean ; and the fact is—the fact is," said the Major, fairly breaking down, "I can't tell you what I mean—but I—I mean to live near you."

The Doctor began to look anxious. He rose and slipped his finger over the Major's pulse, and then kindly took his hand.

"O pray do not alarm yourself about me !" said Grenville, removing his handkerchief and standing up. "I am so sorry, Mrs. Jobson, to have made such a fool of myself. But the truth is I have been thinking so long about this meeting, and—and it has quite unnerved me. I am all right now."

Neither of his hearers looked as if they agreed with this latter declaration. Marian indeed was very grave. Still the restrained herself and said nothing.

"Let us talk about something else," cried the Doctor cheerily, treating the case as one of undue cerebral excitement.

"No," replied Major Grenville "I have begun. Let me finish now. I'm pumped dry. I can go on with it. You know, after you went away with—*her*, you know, do what I would I could not drive it all out of my mind. Poor Broomhall's terrible fate—your sorrow—her state, all these things were before me morning, noon, and night. I tried my best to shake them off. You won't believe it, but I assure you I was said to have become the most devout man in the garrison. Even Chesney, the 'Plymouth brother,' was not half so pious. I couldn't help it, you know," said the Major apologetically, as he glanced shyly at Marian, to see whether she exhibited any signs of amusement; "I had been a precious hard case in my day, and that dreadful affair made life seem too awful to me. Well, though I avoided whist and billiards, and sold off my racers, and stopped betting, and hardly touched wine, *et cetera*, I was simply mooned; I was downright unhappy. The Bible, and the prayers, and sermons, and that sort of thing, didn't go with my temper, and I tell you seriously, it was a question with me whether I ought not to execute the 'happy despatch.' For upon my word, after the best consideration I could give to the subject, I couldn't find out what I was to live for."

Looking in Marian's face, which had hitherto worn a rather cold and puzzled expression, the Major began to see traces of interest and sympathy. This encouraged him, and he went on more freely.

"Lady Pilkington was the only one who seemed to understand me. All the rest thought I was going mad—and I believe I was on the high road to it in a canter. Well, instead of making a fuss about it, and writing to my friends, and that sort of thing, she drove up one day to the old quarters with her ponies, just as she used to do for you, Mrs. Jobson. I was hanging about as usual, talking to nobody.

"Major Grenville," she says, 'I am going to drive to Codrington. Get your hat, please, and accompany me.'

"To Codrington?" I said, shuddering.

"‘Yes. To Codrington ; and I want your escort.’

"It chilled me to the core of my heart to go there. But, you know her. She always has her way, and so I got into the phaeton, and she went off beautifully, the ponies as fresh as colts, and she, as usual, handling the reins to perfection. I suppose we went fully six miles before she opened her lips, and I was so dazed I dared not say a word. But the motion and the air seemed to quicken me, though I was terribly afraid of going out to that place, which I had avoided ever since that day. At last she said :

"‘Mr. Grenville, you are very unhappy. Indeed, you are ill, and if you don’t take care you will be very ill.’

"‘I can’t help it, Lady Pilkington,’ I said.

"‘You are grieving,’ she went on, ‘about things that can never be altered, and what is worse, you are not taking the best way to cure them.’

"‘What can’t be cured must be endured,’ I answered mechanically.

"‘Ah!’ she replied. ‘Proverbs don’t mend misfortunes, so it is no use quoting them. You are neither curing nor enduring.’

"There she hit me, you see, and I shut up.

"‘If poor Broomhall had lived,’ she said, ‘in all probability he would have married Bertha Jobson. In that case you would have forgotten her, and gone on as you were. Now, because’—and here I could detect, for I was watching her closely, you know, a little shake in her voice—‘because Broomhall is dead and poor little Bertha is worse than married, so far as you are concerned, you have abandoned yourself to melancholy, which is only another name for tomfoolery,’ says Lady Pilkington, emphatically.

"‘I can’t help it,’ says I, in a miserable way.

"‘Very well,’ said she. ‘Go and drown yourself, because you have no right to make other people wretched by your misery.’

"That struck me very forcibly, you know. It was an idea that had never occurred to me before. I had been selfishly enjoying my own misery as it were, and without sharing it with anybody. But then you see I was not prepared for her remedy.

"Well, to make a long story short, she drove on to Codrington, and got out of the phaeton and took my arm, and went over the whole scene, where I had seen Ber—Miss Jobson, you know, and Broomhall together, and at last to the fatal spot.

"‘Now,’ she says to me, ‘Grenville, the man who died here was a man of force and character. He was one of the most promising men I ever met. One blasted life has already come out of his grave—is yours to be another? Of course if you would only develop your insanity,’ she went on savagely, ‘we should know how to treat the case, but as long as you keep it to yourself there is no way of laying hold of it.’

"I was tremendously cut up, you may take your oath of it, by her strange hard manner, which no doubt was all put on, and I said :

"‘Well, Lady Pilkington, I can assure you I can’t drive that face, that figure, out of my head. It is so terrible to think——’

"‘You have no right to think about it at all, sir. You have no personal interest in the matter. Take me back to the ponies. You must expel these thoughts and recollections out of your mind. Change the scene. Forget these frightful circumstances, and come back to ordinary life. You have looked on the scene of the catastrophe again. Consider what *she* now is—and how aimless and hopeless is your present life.’

"‘What would you advise me to do?’ I said in despair.

"‘Give up the regiment and go to England,’ she replied decidedly.

"I said nothing to that at the moment, but in the evening I was seized with the horrors. The visit of the day burned into my mind and made me worse than ever. I couldn’t endure the place any more, and so I got leave from the General, and went away by the very next packet.

"Arrived in England, I tried for awhile to return to my old haunts and ways, but it was of no use. I felt I could only be happy where I might sometimes, if only at a distance and unseen, look upon her form and face."

The Honourable Major Grenville uttered these words in a voice and tone so different from his old cynical, drawing

accents, that both Jobson and Marian were struck by the difference.

"I daresay I am a fool," added the Major, "but I am a sincere one. It is no make-believe."

He looked towards Marian, whose glance had softened wonderfully. But she foresaw the extreme inconvenience, if not danger, of encouraging Grenville's mad ideas.

"My dear Major," she said kindly, "your tale is deeply interesting, but consider how awkwardly we are placed!"

"Yes, Grenville," added Jobson. "Bertha has never been restricted. She goes about quite safely. Possibly were she to see you, painful sensations might be revived. How can you expect to be able to live near us? What object is to be served? She is in my belief hopeless as she is."

The Major looked at them both with a puzzled look. He really had no answer to their sensible remarks; so he temporised.

"Well," he said, "at least let the matter lie over till to-morrow."

The next day it happened that Bertha was standing in the garden when the Major came and stood at the gate. There she was, in all her beauty, only a little more matured than it had been when he saw her last. She was plucking some flowers. Seeing a figure at the gate, she seemed a moment surprised, gazed at him intently, walked a few steps towards him with a fluttering haste, and then turned and went into the house. In the hall she met her brother.

"Major Grenville is out there," she said simply, and without the slightest excitement. The Doctor, holding her two hands a minute, was satisfied of that. A little later on he brought her into the room where Major Grenville was, and she shook hands with him without saying anything. It was clear that his presence excited no pain. Yet the Doctor and his wife urged the honourable gentleman to return to England—at all events to abandon his idea of living near them. Grenville would not listen. He remained on at the hotel, gradually establishing himself as an almost necessary part of Cornwall life. Bertha hardly ever took more notice of him than we have seen. But in due time

his strangely quiet and regular life and gentle manner completely won over Marian and the Doctor; and Major Grenville seemed to be satisfied to see them at least once a day, to act as coach and horses to the little Jobsons, to undertake the physical development of Master Taddy, and to follow Bertha about, rarely approaching or being seen by her, whenever she left the house. Thus he had gone loitering on through seven years, and seemed willing thus to go on for ever!

CHAPTER XIV

THE TAP-ROOM OF THE CORNWALL ARMS.

THE tap-room of the rather ancient wooden building founded in the earlier days of the colony and dubbed by its founder *The Cornwall Arms Inn*, now, in modern times, denominated the *Cornwall Hotel*, was and had long been the centre of Cornish life. Areopagus, Forum, exchange, drinking-shop, it was all in one. There was an international character about it. There might be seen the swarthy Indian, moccasined and blanketed, the wiry and wily Yankee, the leathery French Canadian with soft tongue and gentle manners, the English, Scotch, and Irish emigrants dropping h's about loosely or rough upon their r's, and various in the pronunciation of their vowels.

The room was low but of considerable size—in form four-square. Its small French windows with strong frames that had never received more than one coat of paint opened on the street three feet from the ground. You could lounge on their sills and converse with anyone inside or outside, except in winter when the dirty green jalousies had given place to double windows, the crevices of which were stuffed with wool and papered over, and admitted not a whiff of air. In one corner of this room a plain, painted bar was fitted up—its soft upper counter deeply scored with many a dint of rattled tumbler. Few of those brilliant attractions which in our gloomier climate are deemed indispensable to allure the customer to follow sight with taste existed in this bar. It was essentially a place of business, of pure hard drinking, and no mistake. On the shelves behind, instead of rows of coloured flasks and tinted glasses artistically arranged, a few black bottles with their labels, half-a-dozen common glass barrels with metal spouts, some decanters and coarse tumblers, constituted the whole of the paraphernalia of this fane of Bacchus. People who went there did not

wish to have their eyes teased. They went in for a "solid drink." On the counter stood a plate or two of uncooked salt fish shredded up, and of broken crackers. When going away the client of the bar took up one or the other of these; and in nine cases out of ten, as the smart landlord calculated and intended, came back again before long to allay the thirst brought on by these dry expedients.

This landlord, Mr. Thomas Spriggs, was in appearance a very different person from the traditional host. Physically he was a mistake. A small lean man, of wrinkled face, brownish skin, lanky black hair with a touch of grey let in here and there, like the streaks of white in black cornelian—or like the celebrated lock in the hair of Mr. Whistler. His face and chin were smooth-shaven, allowing a clear view of his shrewdly-puckered mouth, which gave the impression that Mr. Spriggs was always sucking in air—or something else. But the high narrow forehead, black shaggy eyebrows, and sparkling eyes of this man produced an effect on beholders altogether out of consistency with the general meanness of his appearance. He was properly considered in Cornwall a very "smart" man. He had made money. He had lent it—at a heavy interest. He had foreclosed mortgages and possessed farms. He "ran" a timber-yard and a saw-mill. Twice he had been elected Mayor of Cornwall. Thus he was a person of property and influence. Dressed in a greasy suit of black, his coat in summer, however, being generally thrown aside, he lounged in his bar-room with thumbs tucked up in the holes of his waistcoat, or went slouching along the street with his hat over the back of his head, and his sharp eye watching everything that was going on.

Not a soul could get into or out of town without the knowledge of Mr. Spriggs, and few without in some manner paying him tribute.

Behind the bar, and in and out, and all over the place from attic to basement, stood or ran about, with short skirts, and pretty little twinkling feet in low shoes, and with an air of pertness that well became her face, Miss "Cicely" Spriggs, the only daughter of the landlord. Taller than her father by a head, with a pretty face, just a trifle too

keen—or to use a more vulgar term, too *knowing* in its expression—with a lithe figure, showing a certain maturity in its rounded outlines and yet full of nerve and grace, wearing a bright, tight-fitting calico dress, with a coquettish little bib and apron, her long dark hair done up carefully, exhibiting a surprising landscape of smooth well-pomatumed islets and groves of embowering curls; what with her neatness, her activity, her slap-dash style and free manner, you could not look at Cecilia Spriggs without looking at her again, and when you looked at her again you found the pleasure was worth the trouble.

At all events Cicely was the only pleasure in life left to Thomas Spriggs. His wife had died many years ago, whilst the child was young, and she was brought up in a haphazard way by Mr. Spriggs and his female “helps.” He kept her as much as possible under his own eye, for he was very fond of her; and when he was not bargaining with Indians and farmers, or driving his rickety skeleton of a buggy over crumpled corduroy roads around Cornwall, buying up produce or collecting debts or the interest thereon, his eye was in the bar-room, and one may say that in the bar-room Cicely was reared. No school for manners or morals, but certainly a place to sharpen up too keenly the young intellect. There day and night the little girl, with the black, quick eyes, and the shrewd face, would remain, now sitting in her wooden chair, now on her father’s knee, listening to rough gossip and scandal, and watching the varieties of countenance and figure supplied by this extraordinary trysting-place of loungers, of gapers, of toppers, and of serious men. How Cicely would have come out of all this, if let alone, one cannot say. She had one of those spirited and self-appreciative natures that throw off the influences of low and vulgar things, just as a splendid constitution resists malaria or contagion, but it must certainly have gone harder with her manners than it did, had she been permitted to grow up in the morbid atmosphere of the bar-room without occasional changes into a better and more refined social climate. The bar-room, as we have said, was the Forum of Cornwall. Here every thing was discussed, public and not public, municipal and personal. The latest

intelligence was going in the society which slaked its thirst at the bar. The latest price for the latest bushel of corn sold in the neighbourhood was quoted in the bar-room, for the bargain was sealed immediately by a drink at the counter. The gravest events of town politics, of local justice, of religious feud, and rancour were disputed in this arena, for hither magistrate and judge, and town councillors and members of the Provincial Parliament, resorted for sedatives or stimulants to their excitement. And here even the clergy might now and then be seen, on special occasions, imbibing generally some of Mr. Spriggs's hot punches after some extraordinary exertions of a pastoral character. Thus it was that one day, Dr. Troutbeck, the worthy Dean of Toronto, a stoutish, vigorous gentleman of moderate learning but of a kindly nature, coming in to get rid of a chill taken at a funeral, observed Cicely, was struck with her looks and shocked at the inappropriateness of her surroundings. He made it his duty to call on Spriggs next morning before business began, and spoke to him earnestly about the injustice he was doing to his child. He succeeded. Cicely, at first much to her disgust, was sent to school for three hours a day. In a short time she took to her lessons, and with comparative ease picked up all that the teacher could impart to her. And as her lively mind could never be satisfied even by the discussions in the bar-room, wide as was their range, Miss Cicely borrowed books wherever she could get them, especially novels, and read with avidity descriptions of societies she could never hope to see, and imbibed theories of life she might never be able to apply. The dull fish-oil lamps had been lit, the fire in the big box-stove, with its open damper, was roaring away merrily, while the smoke and heat rushing through the thin iron sheeting of the stove-pipes made them crackle again, and an ominous red mark in the middle of the iron plates on either side proved that the limits of safety for the old wooden tenement had been passed. But nobody minds this in Canada, and Mr. Podgkiss, sitting within six feet of the hot metal, only noticed the red spot in the middle of the stove as a convenient mark when he wished to relieve his mouth of the saliva generated by a quid he always nourished. His aim

was remarkably true, and the hot metal hissed again under the shower of brown juice. Mr. Podgkiss, as usual, had been the first in, and had secured the old wooden rocking-chair, while Cicely had placed on a table at his side his first tumbler of punch.

The landlord, with his coat off, was arranging the bar, to relieve Cicely, who had for a few minutes taken a seat at a good safe distance from the furnace. To-night she had added a pretty little cap to her other decorations, and there was a bright colour in her cheek. The old men gossiped and she sat and mused, watching the tremulous movements of the heat as it rose from the iron in the imperfect light, and the dancing reflection of the blaze on the opposite wall through the round hole of the damper. Mr. Spriggs, who was a nervous man, was actively moving things about simply to keep himself alive.

"News?" he said to Mr. Podgkiss.

Mr. Podgkiss hit the red mark right in the centre and watched the hissing steam with placid enjoyment.

"None—I reckon. Cold day!"

"Very—Sim Wilcox's nose was frozen."

"Du tell! There's whisky enough in it to keep it warm." Mr. Podgkiss chuckled at his own joke and celebrated it by a shot at the bull's-eye.

"He's a good fellow, Sim Wilcox," replied the landlord deprecating detraction of one of his best customers.

"Very," said Mr. Podgkiss drily, "takes a sight of liquor."

"And always pays cash," said Mr. Spriggs with a certain emphasis.

Mr. Podgkiss philosophically applied himself to his glass and emptied it. He was drinking on credit, but his credit was good. He only had a quaint objection to pay his bills.

"Cissy," he said, "I'll take another, with just a sliver more o' lemon. You're a beauty," he said, leering at her with his odd green eyes, "a Sheby. Juno and Lais all in one!"

Cicely took no notice of this questionable compliment, but handed the empty tumbler to her father to concoct the mixture required.

Mr. Podgkiss, whose classic style may have surprised the reader, was by trade a shoemaker, and by profession a man of letters. "The man of one book" has been celebrated in literature, Mr. Podgkiss was a man of three. For many years he had been a man of only two. A Massachusetts Puritan he had mastered to begin and continued to read his Bible, largely preferring the letter and the spirit of the earlier historical portions. His second book was a volume of the Penny Cyclopædia. His third he had bought at an auction in Cornwall, because it looked big at the money. It was an old and large edition of Lemprière's Dictionary, and he had read it through and through. Thus Mr. Podgkiss, in this remote colony, had by him all that would have been necessary to qualify him to write leading articles for a journal which had the largest circulation in the world. But that ambition was denied him. So he discharged his erudition at his friends. Defective discipline in his earlier years rendered his learning somewhat disorderly. His mind grasped many facts and many names, but could not recall or place them with precision. There was a Babel-like confusion in his brain. He often mixed up his Scripture, historical, and Pagan characters.

"Yes," he went on, musing aloud, "a reg'lar Sheby. She was the goddess who handed round the tumblers on the Areopāgus. A raal booty too. There was a gay fellow called Runnymede did it for the gods."

Cicely took no notice. She set down the second tumbler and resumed her seat with a yawn. Mr. Spriggs always came so tremendously before anybody else.

"Meejor about?" inquired Mr. Podgkiss, throwing his green eye across at the girl but addressing the father.

Cicely immediately looked attentive.

"No, han't seen him to-day," said the landlord. "S'pose he's been out looking after that girl of Doctor Jobson's. Pretty creature she is to be sure! and an idiot. Major is mad too, I should say. Never saw a man take on so after a woman."

"Ay! and she without sense," said Mr. Podgkiss. "Went mad they say like Arachne (he pronounced it *Arratchen*) after her lover. Arratchen, you know, Miss

Cissy, tore her hair on the sands after a fellow named Thesaurus—wonderful story—first ran away with her, then vamoused and left her.”

“Never mind him,” said Cicely pettishly. “I don’t care about your heathen stories.”

“Seen the Meejor just now,” said Mr. Podgkiss, after a superior squirt, and still closely watching the young lady.

His green eyes saw the quick colour flood up underneath her fine transparent skin, and her little ears seemed to quiver, but she sat silent. She had swallowed the question which had risen to her lips.

“Yes; he was comin’ along follerin’ the little witch home as usual, and the Doctor’s boy there—the young Askinnnyax—was trottin’ alongside of her. They’d been tobogginin’ Meejor was smokin’ like a camp fire. Says I, ‘How do, Meejor?’ ‘Very well, Mr. Podgkiss,’ says he, ‘but I’ve had a great fright.’ ‘Along of her?’ I says, nodding towards the gal. ‘In consequence of Miss Jobson—yes, sir,’ he says, quite grand like. ‘She came very near being killed to-day,’ he says. ‘No?’ says I. He nodded. ‘She took herself down Spanker’s hill on a toboggin’—you know the place, Miss Cissy—and upset in the big cahoe at the bottom, and precious near knocked her pretty little brains out.’ ‘Do you think the Doctor’s right,’ says I to the Meejor, ‘to let an eedeot run about like that?’ I’ve allers onderstood the way to treat ’em is to chain ’em up in a room, and let ’em come round like in solitood, like Andromakky tied to the rock.’ The Meejor turns just as white as a sheet. ‘Podgkiss,’ says he, hissin’ and shakin’ like a snake, ‘if ever you suggest such a thing again in my presence, or behind my back, I’ll drive all your teeth down your throat, and break every bone in your body.’ My dander rather riz a bit at that. Says I, ‘Meejor, no offence was meant and none ought to be taken. I was only tellin you——’ He interrupts me right away: ‘Stop,’ he says, ‘I couldn’t bear to think of that sweet young lady chained up like that, and you hurt my feelings. But don’t say it again, Mr. Podgkiss,’ and he trots off at a run after the gal.”

Here Mr. Podgkiss, whose eyes had never left Cicely's face, where white and red had alternated as he told his story, stopped—and scored a bull's-eye.

“Was she hurt?” suddenly inquired Cicely.

“Not a scratch,” replied Mr. Podgkiss.

At this moment Mr. Spriggs left the bar by a door, and returned wrapped in his big blanket coat.

“I am just going round to Councillor Jewett's,” he said; “Cissy, everything's ready. Tell folks I shall not be long.”

He went out into the broad, dark passage, from which an icy wind rushed into the room, and they could hear him shut the double door at the front.

Mr. Podgkiss continued to watch Cicely, whose head was half-averted, her eye gazing towards the door, and her little feet tapping impatiently on the floor. The green in his eyes softened down a little. He expectorated largely, hemmed, looked at her again, and remained silently staring. At length he gave a short dry cough, and said in the softest voice he could assume

“Miss Spriggs.”

The girl started and turned and looked at him sharply.

“Don't ee start now like a frightened hare,” said Mr. Podgkiss, his eyes gleaming with a strange lustre. “Look ee here, I say—Miss—Miss Spriggs—Cissy dear, won't you be my Penelope?” He pronounced it “Pene-loop.”

“Cissy's face flushed crimson and her dark eye looked him through and through.

“Mr. Podgkiss,” she said, “don't be so saucy. What do you mean by calling me Penny-loop? What's that?”

“You don't understand me, Cissy,” said Mr. Podgkiss soothingly, putting his hands on his knees and leaning forward, as he gazed at her with an increasingly unpleasant glow in his eyes. “Look here, Miss Spriggs—Cissy dear—I guess I commence to feel oldish, and I reckon it's time for me to begin to look around and get settled: and there ain't a spryer nor a prettier gal all around these parts—exceptin' maybe that there eedeot gal of Dr. Jobson's. I'm comfortable as you know, twenty thousand dollars anyway—and my house will do up nicely for two people, and if more come, well then——”

Here he stopped in fear and amazement, for Cicely jumped up with flashing eyes, her whole frame quivering with nervous passion.

"Be your—what d' you call it? And marry you, Mr. Podgkiss," she screamed, her little nose pointing to the ceiling, her lips apart, but curling with disdain, and her eyes flashing at the little man. "An old, wilted, weazened hickory nut like you!"

The eyes of Mr. Podgkiss looked like two flaming cat-stones, his under-jaw dropped and his powers of expectoration failed him.

"Wal," he said at length, after watching the pose and action of the girl, "du as you darn please. It ain't my loss. You may be sorry for it yet, Miss Cissy. Howsomer don't ee take on about it"—for Miss Spriggs had sat down and begun to cry with vexation, and Mr. Podgkiss was afraid of Miss Spriggs's father—"Don't ee take on so. There's nice enough gals hereabouts would take it a compliment if Ephraim Podgkiss offered to introduce them to his heart and home—his Layers and Penayts."

"Proud indeed," cried Cissy, suddenly bursting out laughing, as she shook away the tears on either side, "I thought for a moment you were in earnest, old man. I don't want your *liars* and *peanuts*—there! Go and ask Phœbe Clam. She'd take a dried Indian with twenty thousand dollars."

Podgkiss took a shot and drew a long breath. His eyes still gleamed on Cicely, giving her fresh discomfort.

"Phœbe Clam's a gal of sense, if she ain't a booty, and she knows worth when she sees it, which some booties don't. I know I aint a Crusis nor an Appollyon."

"Yes you are!" cried Cissy sharply. "I know who he was."

"He was the god of booty and the liar," said Mr. Podgkiss.

"No he *wasn't*, Mr. Podgkiss. Apollyon is the Devil in the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' Do you suppose I don't know that? If you like to call yourself hard names I'm not going to gainsay them."

"Hum!" said Mr. Podgkiss, running his finger ab-

stractedly over a chin that sadly wanted shaving, "mebbe you're right, Miss Spriggs, now I come to think of it. I should have said Appollo—Phoebius Appollo. I say I ain't a Phoebius Appollo—but what's booty to worth?"

"Twenty thousand dollars' worth,—eh, Mr. Podgkiss?" said Miss Spriggs archly, for she was fast recovering, and fun began to get the upper hand. "Well, why don't you follow out your own ideas and go and get worth instead of coming to—to—*me*? Eh?"

Steps were heard outside the house and Cicely jumped up, and went to Mr. Podgkiss, holding out her hand.

"There, Mr. Podgkiss," she said, "we had better finish this. I am very much obliged to you, but I don't want to marry; let us shake hands and be good friends."

The glassy green of Mr. Podgkiss's eyes became a dead dark stone colour as he coldly took her hand, and while she turned to open the door to some one who had entered the hall, he sank back in his rocking-chair, and swallowed a poisonous dose of nicotine, which made him cough and sputter.

Before Podgkiss had recovered, the door had been opened by Cicely, to admit the entrance of the Major.

"Why, Miss Cissy," he said, as she nodded to him, with a fresh blush on her cheek, "you are charming to-night. How bright your eyes are, and what a jolly cap. What's up?"

Cicely looked saucily over her shoulder at Mr. Podgkiss. "I have been talking to Mr. Phoebius Appollyon," she said.

The Major guessed in a moment that Mr. Podgkiss had been airing his classics.

"Ah! Mr. Appollyon he calls himself, eh?" said he, quizzically glancing at Podgkiss and then at her, "call him Mephistopheles—Beware Margarethe!"

"What?" cried Podgkiss roused, "say that again?"

"Me—phis—toph—e—les."

"Whew!" said Podgkiss, "that ain't in Lemprière."

"No—it's in Faust."

"Faust? that ain't in Lemprière neither. What was it you called *her* just now?"

"Margarethe."

"*That* ain't in Lemprière."

The Major laughed. "Here, Cicely, help me off with my coat. Won't you?"

With a happy face, Miss Cicely, who was a head taller than Major Grenville, undid the scarlet sash, taking an unnecessary time over the operation, her face coming very near the Major's as she leaned over to untie the knot—so near that he could hear the rapid breath, and almost feel the warm glow of her cheek on his chilled face; then she pulled the coat off his shoulders, and went away to shake and whisk the snow from it in the hall. Podgkiss watched these operations like a cat, his eyes had recovered their bottle-green brightness. The Major sat down and drew out his pipe. Cicely soon appeared rolling before her an easy-chair, her father's, from the parlour.

"Take that, Major. Shall I fill your pipe?"

The Major took the comfortable chair, and throwing a bright, soft glance into her face, handed her his meerschaum and watched her lithe figure as she hastened to the counter, and filled the pipe from an earthenware jar marked "Virginia." Then she brought it to him, and lighting a match on the stove held it to the pipe, in her pretty fingers, while he puffed away.

"Sweet Virginia!" he said, with another soft glance at her.

"I guess they make it up with molassy—least they do all the chewin' tobaccy. I'll taste it," said Mr. Podgkiss, taking the quid out of his mouth and throwing it under the stove. "Miss Cissy, will you please bring me some in your fingers?"

"Help yourself, Mr. Podgkiss," she said, "there's the jar on the counter."

Mr. Podgkiss did not rise, and the Major puffed away, while Cissy ran to open the door to her father, whose step she recognised. He was accompanied by the lawyer. Several others entered after them, and the room became animated, chairs were dragged noisily over the floor, loud voices resounded against the wooden walls, the planks here and there were sprinkled with dry snow which soon melted,

leaving dark damp pools about. Cicely mixed various drinks and went to and fro from the bar. The Major, as he lay back silent in his chair, watched her through the rising smoke, she kept an eye always on him, and Mr. Podgkiss with his green gaze watched them both. He was, however, roused from this occupation by the entrance of Mr. Roger, the master of the Grammar School.

The schoolmaster was a Border Englishman, tall and manly, with pleasant clear blue eyes, a good head of hair, a large mouth filled with large and handsome teeth, altogether a powerful and agreeable looking fellow. He stood six feet high, and yet there was a gentleness in his eyes, his voice, his manner, and in the smoothness of his white and even delicate forehead, that quite subdued the rough impression produced by his big limbs, his suit of coarse grey Canadian cloth, and his huge thick-soled boots. There were very few of the powerful Gaels in the Highland colony of the MacDonalds at Glengarry, not far off, who could wrestle or toss the caber with Mr. Roger, and there was not a child or a woman in Cornwall by whom his gentleness was not appreciated. When Cicely saw him she shook hands with him, and as he looked down on her with his clear glance, a slight flush passed over his forehead—it could not be distinguished in his healthy sun-burnt cheeks.

Mr. Roger was Mr. Podgkiss's special aversion. Before the schoolmaster's arrival in Cornwall, Podgkiss enjoyed the fame of a classical authority in the bar-room: but on the weekly occasions when Mr. Roger came in for an evening's chat with his neighbours, and a pipe or two,—he was a bachelor,—he amused himself by entering the classical lists with the poor shoemaker and completely unhorsing and routing him. It was Lemprière and discipline against Lemprière without discipline, and the schoolmaster's dry humour enabled him to show off Mr. Podgkiss's pretensions to the great delight of the company.

"Hey! Master Podgkiss!" he said on this evening, as he slyly brought a seat and sat down as near as possible to the shoemaker's chair, "how are Sardanapalus, Maharshalal-hashbaz, and Melpomene? Why man, ye're not looking in a classic humour at all to-night! What's awry wi' ye? Has

Zeus been unkind—or Pluto unfavourable—or has Cupid wounded ye?”

The unhappy man started and looked at Roger and then at Cicely. She was mixing a grog at the bar, and he intercepted a glance between her and the Major. But he saw in a moment that she could not have told anything to the schoolmaster.

“Mister Roger,” he replied, pulling his wits together, “I’ve, I reckon, is always good to all good men. My business is goin’ fair enough, and Cupid ain’t one of my divinities.”

Cicely had been listening with her sharp ears. She laughed.

“Mr. Roger,” she said archly, “Cupid is the god of Love, ain’t he?”

“Ay, ay! Miss Cicely, as ye’ll find out too soon,” replied Roger, looking at her keenly. “A dangerous playmate, and a dangerous boy to cross, too. Ye never know when he may not turn up and shoot an arrow right into your heart.

“O, I am not afraid,” she said, “I wear stays. But I fancy Mr. Podgkiss has been shot through the heart, in spite of what he says.”

Podgkiss turned round with a deprecating glance.

“All right, Mr. Podgkiss, I won’t tell, only she’s a nice young lady, and her name begins like your own with a P—Miss Penny-loop, and you’re her Phoebus Appollyon.”

A roar of laughter from the schoolmaster, the Major, and the lawyer followed this sally, and the shoemaker took to his pipe, began to smoke moodily, and silently watched the Major, who was watching Cicely. Some one else was watching the two, while he puffed out vast clouds of smoke—watching them closely and with large blue eyes. The room had filled—there were noisy groups—the smoke rolled up from thirty pipes—the glasses clinked. In and through the cloudy atmosphere Cicely ran with tumblers and bottles and jugs.

Councillor Jewett, who was a jovial man and of some authority in the place, generally took the lead at these symposia, and he now called on the Major for a song. The Major was not a frequent attendant at these gatherings, but

it was his rule to please as many people as he could, and he made an effort to render "The Monks of Old," which he gave in tolerable garrison style. Others followed, and poor Mr. Podgkiss with his cracked voice was obliged to intone "The Cork Leg," a song which was always called for from him, as peculiarly appropriate to his business. Then came the turn of Mr. Roger, who having a good voice, was a favourite. When the call, which was inevitable, at length reached him, any one who could have examined him closely would have observed traces of excitement in his face, his eyes, and his shaking hands. However, he looked at Cicely. She was sitting down behind the bar. When she heard his name she gave him a smile and a nod to encourage him, and then she glanced at the Major who was looking steadily at her. Mr. Roger took the pipe out of his mouth, and cleared his throat, and began. The song and the tune none of them had ever heard before. He had not gone beyond three lines when the whole room listened in perfect silence.

THE GOLDEN MAID.

*On the swinging sign is a golden lass,
With golden hair and golden shoon,
And she beckons aye to all who pass,
'Turn in, turn in, and quaff a glass,'
She seems to cry to each loitering loon—
'Tis the sign of 'The Golden Maid.'*

*O 'The Golden Maid' is an hostel old
With oaken floor and oaken wall;
And mine host is fat, and strong, and bold,
And his daughter is fair, with locks of gold,
And eyes so brown, and feet so small,
And they call her the 'Golden Maid.'*

*'Free is my heart,' cried the Golden Maid,
'Nor haughty lord, nor yeoman bold
Shall bind me in wedding chains,' she said;
'I'll be single and free, till they lay my head
'Neath Jarrow yew, when the blood grows cold
At my heart,' quo' the Golden Maid.*

*To the Golden Inn came wandering Will,
A gittern upon his shoulder swung,
He tickled the strings with cunning skill,
His voice rang sweet and his eyes did kill.
'O my breath is gone—and my soul is wrung
With his song,' cried the Golden Maid.*

*Then his gittern he swung on his shoulder strong,
 And bade farewell with glistening eye ;
 'Fare thee well', then, dear love, it is not for long.
 'Ye will wait and hope,' said his silvery tongue,
 'Till I come from the wars by and bye.'
 'Ay me !' sighed the Golden Maid.*

*The maiden had sworn, 'Oh single and free
 Will I die when my heart grows old !'
 And single and free 'neath Tarrow yew-tree,
 Neither maiden nor married dame, lies she :
 And the gentle snow with his mantle cold
 Hides the shame of the Golden Maid.*

The Major had sat puffing away at his pipe with his eyes no longer on Cicely but on the ceiling, and Cicely, sitting quietly at the bar, had ceased to look at the Major, and was intently watching every word as it issued out of the schoolmaster's mouth.

"Where did you get that song, Mr. Roger?" inquired the Major quietly, after the applause had subsided.

"It is by an unknown author, and its style would indicate an old one," replied Roger with a blush.

"I don't like it," said Cicely, with her clear incisive voice. "Please don't sing it again, Mr. Roger."

"Not if you don't like it," said the schoolmaster, turning his blue eyes full on her, and gazing steadily till she averted her own.

"Why, Miss Cissy," said Mr. Podgkiss, with an irritating drawl, "I reckon it a first-rate song. You give me them words in writin', Mr. Roger, I'll learn 'em off. Good night, Miss," he said, rising, and managing to get near the bar as he passed out, he leaned towards her, a world of malice in his green eyes, and added : "Why don't *you* ask him for a copy too, Miss Spriggs?"

CHAPTER XV

MARIAN JOBSON TO LADY PILKINGTON, GREETING.

MY DEAR LADY PILKINGTON,
 “We were so gratified, after such a long silence, to receive your nice long letter, with all its interesting news, and to learn that you and General Pilkington are so well and fortunate. Indeed it seemed an age since we had heard from you, though of course we saw a good deal about your movements in the *Times*, and we were able to explain to ourselves the reason for your long silence by the announcement that Sir William’s term of office at the Cape had expired, and that he had received that splendid appointment at Aldershot. How glad you must be to get back once more to old England! There is no place like it; and do you know, although we are comparatively well off and happy here, my heart longs for the old home more and more every year. I was greatly interested in the account in your last letter—written so long ago!—of life at the Cape. At least you had plenty of good and obedient servants, and the fact that they were not so *dressy* as was desirable, seems to me, accustomed to the impertinence and affectation of these wretched Canadian ‘helps,’ to be rather a recommendation. Indeed, I heartily wish Jobson had selected South Africa instead of this place, where the climate alternates between the fires and snows of the *Inferno*. And the people—O the people! I should like just for once to show you one of our evening parties! We have a very decent person here, a dean named Troutbeck. He is a D.D. of the ‘University of Toronto,’ a place I dare say you never heard of. It is a small college in a town on Lake Ontario. This gentleman is passably well educated, and Jobson finds him sufficiently intelligent to conduct a conversation. Then there is the French *curé*, M. Pommery, a genial, jolly French Canadian,

with very polite manners, and *quite* liberal in his views. I perfectly delight in him. There is also our rival Doctor Skirrow, a big coarse-featured man, educated in Montreal, talking a sort of Irish-American language, with a harsh, grating voice. It is the ordinary Canadian lingo, and I think it is the most dreadful language in the known world! It frightens me to expose my poor children to such a vulgar accent. I am told his father was a stevedore at Quebec, who had emigrated from the north of Ireland. He understands his profession pretty well (they have a good school of medicine at Montreal), but apart from his horrible pronunciation, he is so *vulgar*, and *outré*, and self-satisfied. Indeed, if I were ill I would rather die than have him at my bedside. Besides, he hates Jobson, and goes about talking against him in the *most ungentlemanly* way. J., however, has decided to take no notice, and insists on my visiting Mrs. Skirrow, who is a Canadian, born on a farm somewhere in the neighbourhood, a pale, thin, vinegary sort of person. You know what I mean. And she talks through her nose in a short, snappy way; and one day actually *spat* on our dining-room hearth-rug! Then we have some two or three lawyers, one a man of great cleverness, educated at Toronto. I don't understand about it, but the solicitors here are all barristers, and *vice versa*. Mr. Latouche comes of an Irish family of some position, indeed he is a cousin of the Earl of Newtonlimatoddy, so his wife says, an exceedingly nice person, well-bred and quite *comme il faut*. She is really one of the few persons in whose company one feels at home here, although I have learned to look for very good feeling and many fine traits of character under very rough and unpromising exteriors in this place. You see the society is so new and so *mixed*. We are obliged to visit very queer people, farmers and shopkeepers, many of whom have become quite wealthy, from being nothing more than poor immigrants. We dined last night at a farm called Brincklev, situated at a village called Moulinette, near the head of some extraordinary rapids here called the *Long Sault*. Jobson is very much appreciated by the farmer, Mr. Morton, who is a prosperous Scotchman, and was a 'crofter,' as he calls it, in Morayshire or Sutherland, I

forget which. His wife was a Glasgow spinner, but I can assure you she is a very respectable body, and much better behaved than Mrs. Skirrow. They received us in a big room in their wooden farmhouse, which seems to be the living room of the family, where they read, work, eat, and do everything but sleep. It was comfortably furnished, and even had a *piano*, on which Miss Morton, who had very red swollen fingers, however, from continual daily work, performed very creditably, considering. They were *kindness itself*. But the dinner was something prodigious. Pickerel from the river—they make holes in the ice, and light fires, and the fish come up and get caught—fowls, ham, roast beef, *and* roast mutton; plum pudding, apple and pumpkin tarts—the latter a favourite delicacy here—junkets, &c., &c.: the table perfectly groaned; and what was most whimsical, all the things were put on at once, and they expected you to eat them all together. They pressed them all upon one, *no lens volens*, plate after plate was sent round, until each guest had half a dozen satellites, as it were, round the central dish from which you were eating. Jobson understands the people perfectly, and enters thoroughly into the humour of the thing, but not having an insatiable stomach, I fear I rather mortified the good people by refusing to be loaded like a commissariat mule. But you know they were perfectly kind, and, though wanting in polish, well behaved; and Mr. Morton talked most intelligently about English and Canadian politics—the latter I can assure you a most dreadful sink of meanness and corruption just now. Mr. Morton says it will grow better, and certainly I don't see how it could get worse. Our little Barbadoes was a paradise to it. But, dear me! I have been going on too far and too fast: *revenons à nos moutons*.

"It was most gratifying to us to hear that your 'boy,' Tremenheere, is married, and so well. The Corbitts are a great county family, are they not, and very rich? Jobson remembers one at Oxford. Is it really true that your hair has turned perfectly white? It must look very handsome, though you naturally don't like it, being so young. Do you think that the South African climate had anything to

do with it? I suppose it turned gradually and not in a single night? There is an American wash sold here, which I find to be very useful—'Mrs. Swan's Vito-Capillant.' Jobson laughs at the name, but I assure you it is *most useful*, and has saved my back hair, which was coming out *frightfully*. I don't know whether it can be bought in London, but I should like to send you some, if the distance were not so great, and bottles are so liable to get cracked in these long voyages.

"Here we are going on in the jog-trot with which my letters must have made you so familiar. Bertha looks less childlike, and her general health is wonderfully improved. But mentally, alas! she remains exactly as she was. Jobson watches her with the closest attention and notes every symptom. I never saw such devotion as the dear fellow shows, and I tell him sometimes in fun that it would be worth my while to feign illness to get as much from him. Of course it is mere fun, for a better man never woman had for a husband; but he still has a habit of rushing on in his own way without consulting one and getting himself into scrapes out of sheer thoughtlessness. He was offered five hundred dollars the other day to go and attend the Prime Minister who is very ill. I know something of the person from Mrs. Latouche, who is intimate with all these political scamps. Well, I advised him *not to stir* from here without the fee in hand, or part of it. Of course he pooh-poohed my advice, and went off and stayed away a week, and lost Mr. Cradock's last illness, one of our wealthiest patients, who was obliged to send for Skirrow, and then, if you please, Dr. J. came back here, after spending fifty dollars, without a penny; and Mrs. Latouche says he may whistle for his money. I cannot understand why men will be so obstinate and absurd. But you would be touched to see his attention to Bertha. We do all we can to draw her out. But she rarely gives us any sign of recognition of the care we bestow on her. It is very trying to me sometimes, to go on sacrificing and working for her, and yet never to see any token of appreciation. But we love her so much, she is so gentle, and we cannot forget what a dreadful dispensation of Providence it is which deprives one so young and

beautiful of the use of her intelligence. Your little godson is her great friend. They are inseparable. She cannot take a walk without him, and I believe he is the only living being who can get her to talk. Jobson sometimes follows them unseen, and he has found out that she now and then chats quite intelligently with Taddy about his little affairs. This gives Arthur some hope. She is perfectly safe, never violent, and hardly ever sullen or angry—simply apathetic. She will take up a book and cast her eyes over the pages, but if you watch her you can see she is not taking anything in, only going through a mechanical exercise. Jobson says that if anything should occur to cause her to ‘work her mind,’ as he puts it—to set the watch-spring in motion—she might yet recover. His theory is that part of the brain has been completely stunned by that frightful incident, and that it may be possible to revive the action. But, for my part, looking at the long years that have passed, and the useless efforts we have made, I have given up all hope. As it is, she sometimes gives us little frights. She is very fond of walking and boating; and there is plenty of scope on the immense river and many beautiful islands for wandering about. Rather against my judgment my husband encourages it. Though there is an Indian settlement down the river, and these people—a hang-dog looking lot—roam about quite freely in the woods, &c., he says they will never harm her, and she appears quite strong and fearless in managing a light little skiff he had built for the purpose, as the canoes are very dangerous. He seems to be right about the Indians, for one day, just before the cold weather set in, she disappeared for several hours. As she had been seen in the morning going down the river in the skiff, all the boats and canoes in Cornwall started off, Jobson and Major Grenville, about whom I shall say more directly, taking the lead in search of her. Well, they went six miles ransacking every island and cove, until they reached the Indian village, where a canoe put off and they learned that a white lady was on shore there. They hurried to the village and found a crowd collected in the little Roman Catholic church. There was Bertha, sitting with her hat off and her hair down all over her shoulders, and

the people all round on their knees worshipping her. They would not believe that anything so beautiful and so strange was human, and the priest had to be sent for to explain to them who she was and what was the matter with her. He told Jobson afterwards that she may go among the Indians with perfect safety—that they never will believe she is not something more than human. Arthur has so much faith in the system of letting her do as she likes, and she is so careful of herself and so quiet, that we are greatly relieved to hear this. The only time she has shown any deep feeling or agitation was a few days after the above event, when she went down with Taddy and found the boat had been taken out of the water, and drawn high up on the bank. After trying in vain to move it, she sat down and wrung her hands and cried like a child. Taddy was immensely distressed, and set up a loud *boo-hoo*, which brought Major Grenville on the scene, who still remains on, as I have told you before, and follows her about at a distance. It is all really too romantic and absurd ! Well, he ran down and with the assistance of the miller at the flourmill, launched the little bark again, upon which, drying her eyes and simply saying ‘Thank you,’ she took Taddy into the boat and pulled away. I assure you I am terribly frightened about letting the little fellow go about with her so freely : but Jobson will not hear of any attempt to stop it, because he says she would become hopelessly inconsolable. Then Major Grenville does nothing in the world but smoke and look after her and Taddy. It is altogether the most extraordinary thing I ever knew or saw to observe the change that has come over him. He is most steady and exemplary—though Jobson insists that it has made him very stupid, ‘not a difficult thing’ you will say ! I don’t know what I should do without him. He comes in every morning, as he says, ‘for orders,’ his coat smelling frightfully of tobacco, for he smokes like a factory chimney ; and although, as you know, I detest the practice, I am obliged to make an exception in his favour, he is so kind and attentive. He puts Taddy through sword exercise, and has taught him boxing. Last week they turned the drawing-room into a perfect *ring*, the Major on his knees, and Taddy striking at him most ferociously. The boy is very strong for his age ; and do you know he hit

Grenville so hard in the eye as to discolour it. Since that I have stopped such scenes in the drawing-room, and now I believe they go out to the wood-shed. It is very wonderful to see him, but I often ask him why he deserts his people at home, and wastes his life out here; and he simply answers, 'They don't much care about me, nor I about them, and I cannot be happy anywhere else.' I told him one day it was *idiotic*; but he seemed so hurt that I let him alone now.

"So far as his profession goes, my dear husband has succeeded excellently. He is even sent for to other parts of Canada for consultations on special subjects, and for surgical operations, at which he is very steady and skilful. In fevers also his opinion is valued. There is plenty of practice in that sort of thing. Smallpox is almost incessant among those poor Indians, and it spreads to the whites. Scarlet fever, ague, and typhoid abound. I am kept in a state of *continual terror* about my children; and it is the more annoying because it was perfectly unnecessary. I was assured that Quebec was most healthy, situated on a hill, and with very good society. However, we have bought and paid for our house, and have some money lent out on mortgage, and so ought not to complain.

"All the children are well except little Edith, who has had bronchitis. The cold here is *deadly* sometimes.

"I fear Jobson will hardly be able to find time to write to General Pilkington by this mail, but he desires his affectionate remembrances to you both. How I wish we could see you! Sometimes I think we are quite going to seed here, and should hardly know how to behave in good society, were we to return to it. I am really ashamed of myself. I have covered three sheets and crossed two! How will you ever make it out? It seems a relief to me to pour out my troubles to you; you always treat them so affectionately. Believe me,

"Your ever loving

"MARIAN G. JOBSON.

"P.S.—I should be so much obliged if you could tell me what sort of bonnets people are wearing now in London. Our fashions are two years old."

CHAPTER XVI.

TADDY GOES TO SCHOOL.

THE time had come when it was necessary that our hero's mind should begin to receive some culture. Hitherto, up to very nearly nine years of age, his wise father had let him run, not to weed or seed, but to healthy outdoor growth, with such indoor teaching as he could pick up while he ran. The boy could read—and had read. Lying on the floor near the warm stove he would spend many an hour of the wintry days over books of imagination or of life, like the Holy War and the Pilgrim's Progress and the never-to-be-wearisome Robinson Crusoe. Mrs. Jobson further thought it to be her duty, not merely to his absent godfather and godmother, but to her child's safety and moral and religious good health, to instruct him in the Catechism—a task not easy, and by him little appreciated. The refined fancy and noble sentiments of Bunyan did awaken him to a world of thought—of quaint and curious thought, and his imagination often revelled in the visions of the great Dreamer, and his mind even sought to comprehend their meaning. On the other hand, the healthy English spirit of pluck and adventure was quickened within him by the tale of the Shipwrecked Mariner, with its vividly realistic incidents. Its moral reflections did not pass without impression over a naturally thoughtful and morbidly sensitive nature. For Master Jobson, who had inherited little of the von Stiffkin physique, had nevertheless much of his mother's fineness and quickness. He was a woman's boy. If he were proud and bold in some circumstances, in others he was shy and timorous. A harsh word not only roused but wounded him. A sally on his appearance or his action sank deeply into his nature as an outrage, it set his blood boiling and his heart pit-patting. The ingenuous

flush that coloured his clear skin and the nervous action of his little body, showed how quick and sensitive his being was. On the other hand, it was surprising to see the chivalry of the little man if his aunt or his brothers and sisters were in danger—how he stood up to beggars, or to dogs, or to Indians, if they menaced an approach beyond the bounds of civility or safety. Once, indeed, when a huge Newfoundland dog rushed into the yard where the children were playing, and Taddy, undertaking with a stick to face and do him battle while the little ones fled screaming to the maternal nest, was incontinently knocked over by the great brute, and seemingly was about to be gobbled up. Major Grenville ran to the rescue only just in time to save his young friend from a ferocious treatment which might at least have left its life-long marks upon him. Taddy would have felt quite a hero after this event, had not his mother taken him down forthwith by telling him that he was a fool for trying to fight an animal that was more than his match—an observation that was mortifying, and apparently harsh, but which, on turning it over in his mind he thought had a good deal of wisdom in it. After all, many of the qualities which are called generous and manly are not in the long run the most practical for life and action.

Mrs. Jobson was proud of her boy, who had taken almost all his training from herself; who entered a room with the air of a nobleman's son, and bowed and saluted friend or stranger with the grace of a gentleman; whose pronunciation of the English language had been carefully cultivated and weeded of all the horrors so prevalent in the Canadian lingo of mixed dialects of Britain, an *olla podrida* of monstrous perversions and solecisms in grammar, in accent, in pronunciation. Her ideal of the education for her boys had been to secure a tutor, "a university man," and then to send them off one by one to Harrow or Rugby and Cambridge. For this she denied herself not only many a luxury but not a few necessities—hoping almost against hope, that ere Taddy arrived at the age for tuition, they would be in a position to begin to carry out her wishes. When occasionally the good Doctor reminded her that every additional

child was adding to the expenses, and that it behoved them to scheme warily in order to do justice to the whole tribe, she resisted him with lively eloquence, and reminded him that whatever the Jobsons might be content to be or not to be, a descendant of the von Stiffkins must have the education of a gentleman. Still, as the years went on, Marian saw that her ideal was getting further and further off, and when at last the Doctor propounded the necessity of sending Taddy to the Grammar School, she was obliged with a shudder to admit that there was nothing for it but to let him go. Doctor Jobson had judiciously led the way to this, by introducing David Roger to his house, where the manly presence and gentle manners and sound good sense of the schoolmaster had made a favourable impression on dame Jobson, though her fine ear detected traces of rough Northumbrian in the king's English as spoken by the worthy tutor.

But of course the most harrowing consideration was sending such a boy as that to mix with all those vulgar people's children. Skirrow's boy went there, that nasty little broad-nosed brat, who used to come and make faces at the children through the garden palings. Even old Michael, who sawed their wood for them, had a boy at school, who spite of his Irish pronunciation and rude ways had taken the prize for English and Latin in the second class.

"Well, my dear Marian," said the Doctor philosophically, "the world is made up of such people. I have to deal with their fathers and mothers, and my boy must learn to deal with the children. They will all grow up together. All we can do is to teach him religion and morality, and— and correct pronunciation and good manners at home. If he is naturally a clown, he will grow up a clown. If he is by nature a gentleman, he will come through unscathed."

"My dear Jobson, that is how you always aggravate me. Do you think education and association have nothing to do with it? Look at the trouble I have had to keep the children from taking up the vile accent of these Irish girls! Ella has a distinct burr."

"It will all go away, my dear, when they associate with cultivated people by-and-by."

"Ay, *when*, Doctor Jobson. But we are placed beyond the hope of such a thing by the arrangements you made nine years ago. Had we settled at Quebec— —"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders, and tried to divert the good lady from this subject.

"I thought," he said quietly, "that it was breed and not association on which you relied. The descendant of a von Stiffkin can surely never be contaminated by vulgar associations."

"Breed! Dr. Jobson," said the lady with asperity. "Breed! What a vulgar word to use to a lady! Why, *positively* you are getting as bad as the people about us. Dr. Skirrow could not have been more coarse. What you meant to say," she went on with dignity, "was that high birth and a distinguished ancestry are always apparent in the manners even of people who have been unfortunate, but I have never gone so far as to say that associations count for nothing, and I feel it is very unfair of you to exaggerate my opinions so absurdly."

"Well, well, dear Marian, he has birth, and at home he has a mother well-born and well-bred, if you'll forgive me for using that vulgar expression, and the two together will, I doubt not, vanquish the effects of the coarse and rude society into which necessity drives him! What more can we say, my dear? Roger is a gentleman at heart."

"With a horrid Northumbrian burr."

"With a Northumbrian burr, that has a certain Doric beauty about it,—and a fair knowledge of English classics, and I can tell you with a wonderful power of imparting what he knows. Let us try how it goes, and if it fails we must make a sacrifice and do something else."

So one morning Master Taddy, a satchel on his shoulder, dressed in a nice suit of grey tweed, and wearing a huge white collar on which his luxuriant curls fell down, followed the Doctor up the street to be introduced to David Roger and the school. At some distance from the common brick building where Mr. Roger ruled with rod and voice, they could hear a noise of children loudly

declaiming their lessons. When they entered, the school-master, with a cane in his hand, was drilling a long row of boys in geography. He walked up and down before a huge map of Europe, on which no names were printed, and pointing to boundaries of countries, or to rivers or to places, and at the same time calling on a boy, expected to receive in immediate answer the proper geographical term. His whole body, his hands, his feet, his eyes, his throat, his features were all working. There was intensity and energy in every attitude and every word. He was trying to throw some of his own spirit into the spirits before him. Every now and then the cane rapped the desk, to produce order beyond the class where other classes were writing or studying. His eye was everywhere. His cheery voice rang through the room encouraging the quick, reproving the dullards, wakening up everybody.

"Stand up all!" he shouted in a voice that sounded like a command addressed to the foretop in a man-of-war.

"Sit down!" in the same stentorian tone.

He turned and saluted the Doctor, and took Taddy's hand, who knew him, and who looking up straight in his eyes felt he was not afraid of him.

In a few minutes his father had gone, and Master Taddy was sitting with his new slate before him, at the foot of the fourth class, with instructions to draw up ten lines of figures as neatly as he could.

"Wot is it?" said a voice behind him.

"It's a girl—see them curls," said another.

"Look at her collar," said a third.

Taddy's ears grew wonderfully red, but putting on his dignity he chose to go on with his work as if he had not heard anything. Presently a very sharp feeling in his head made him start and rub his hand vigorously over the spot. There was a titter. An ingenious boy had performed the familiar process of selecting a long hair and pulling it.

"Silence down there," cried Mr. Roger. "Skirrow, you've seen Jobson before, you need not stare so at him now. Now, boys, fair-play to a new comer I've always told you. Attention!"

Ten minutes elapsed, during which Taddy's figures beginning in the left-hand corner of the slate had taken a meandering route to the middle of the opposite side and back to the lower left-hand corner.

The boy next him, a black-haired, brown-faced little fellow, with a nose that betrayed his Hibernian origin, stuck the aforesaid nose over the slate, and chuckled.

"Crickey," he remarked, "won't Old Davy give it to you?"

"Who is Old Davy?"

"Why, Davy Roger—him!" said the boy, indicating the schoolmaster by a motion of his chin—his hands were engaged in his pockets.

"It is very rude of you to speak of Mr. Roger like that," remarked Taddy.

"Bosh!" said the boy.

"You mustn't say 'bosh' to me," said Taddy, his face becoming red, and his curls beginning to rise with electrical stiffening.

"What a fool you are!" exclaimed the boy.

Before he could avoid it, a blow delivered on his flat nose with Master Taddy's little right fist, well doubled up in the style taught him by the Major, made the sparks fly in the boy's eyes, and he felt the blood trickling down his face. With a cry he threw himself on Taddy and seized his long curls, but the schoolmaster had seen the blow and was down upon the pair in a twinkling. He lifted them both by their collars, crushing up the brave white handiwork of Mrs. Jobson, and pulled the two asunder. Then he carried them up the room, and putting them in front of his desk, and ordering all the school, which had become tremendously excited, to sit down, and keep silence, he sat in judgment. The Irish boy was crying, and wiping the blood off his nose with his jacket-sleeve. Master Jobson, pale but firm, faced the schoolmaster, and looked up straight into his eyes.

Roger's clear eye rested a moment on the boys, as if contrasting the two types and the two natures.

"Mulligan," he shouted to the Irish boy, "stop crying, sir—be a man."

Mulligan's sob subsided to a snivel.

"Jobson," he said, "I saw you strike Mulligan first. What is the meaning of this?"

"He insulted me," said Taddy.

"He insulted you!" said Mr. Roger, with an admirable tone of sarcasm. "And pray, Mr. Jobson, junior, how did this youth manage to infringe upon your dignity, eh?"

"He called me a fool, sir."

"Well, and you thought it right forthwith to prove that he was correct, did you, Master Jobson, by hitting him on the nose, before the whole school and before me, its master and governor, in whose charge by the way your father has only just placed you?"

The school laughed, and Taddy coloured. He detested being laughed at, but he nevertheless felt that there was some righteousness in the master's sarcasm. But the schoolmaster now turned to the other boy.

"What did you call Jobson a fool for, sir?"

The boy made no reply. The question was thrice repeated and received no answer.

"Very well, if he will not tell us himself, boys, you will all admit that we are entitled to ask the other side for the explanation. Is it not so?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Jobson, you are free to speak, and in my judgment and that of the school may honourably tell us what took place."

Taddy straightened himself up. He glanced for an instant at the boy beside him, snivelling with hand to face, standing on one leg with the other drawn up against its knee, and tremblingly listening for what he knew must be Taddy's account. Then Taddy looked up at the schoolmaster.

"I would rather not tell, sir," he said quietly.

A movement among the boys showed that by the majority little Taddy's attitude was highly appreciated. Roger looked puzzled for a moment. Only for a moment, however. He saw that it was useless to try to go into the antecedent circumstances.

"Boys," he said, "both the culprits refuse to give us any further information. All we know is that one called the other a fool and that the other hit him on the nose. No doubt it is a gross 'insult,' as Jobson calls it, to call another boy a fool—and One, the greatest and gentlest of authorities, said that to speak thus to a brother man was to incur the danger of hell-fire. But if we were all to go round the world looking for 'insults' and avenging them in the way Jobson has done, every man, woman, and child would have a bloody nose or a black eye."

Taddy joined in the laugh at the picture David Roger had presented to them.

"So that Jobson's reprisal—spell reprisal, Skirrow.

Right, sir. What does it mean? Right again, sir. Jobson's reprisal was unpardonable—unpardonable in its nature, being a blow for a word—a pain for a mere breath of wind—an outrage for an expression a sensible man or boy would disregard as beneath contempt; and it was unpardonable in its circumstances, for it was done in school hours, and in my presence. I am the person most insulted. It is my dignity and our dignity as a school that Jobson has outraged. Now my judgment is this, Mulligan will ask Jobson's pardon for having called him a fool, Jobson will ask Mulligan's pardon for having hit him on the nose. And then he will beg my pardon and yours for having broken our rules and outraged the dignity of the school."

Mulligan stammered out an apology to our hero, who held out his hand, and said, to the amusement of the schoolmaster:

"I am very sorry for having hit you so hard—but you ought not to call me a fool." Then turning to Mr. Roger he said, "I beg pardon, sir, for having broken the rules."

The schoolmaster came down and took the boy's hand, he did not touch Mulligan.

"We shall get along together very well, Master Jobson," he said, "if you won't be too fiery about insults and will keep your fists to yourself, at all events inside the school."

In the evening David Roger walked round to Doctor Jobson's house, and was introduced to the parlour where the Doctor, Mrs. Jobson, and the Major were sitting. He

related the incident of the morning, which made the Doctor and Major Grenville laugh heartily, and excessively annoyed Mrs. Jobson. However she said nothing to Mr. Roger.

"Mrs. Jobson," said the schoolmaster before he went away, "did you find your boy's hair and collar out of order when he came home?"

"A perfect fright, Mr. Roger. I can't imagine what you do to them at school."

"Well," said Mr. Roger, "to save him from much suffering and great untidiness, may I suggest that his curls should all be cut off, and that he should wear a small collar? I foresee that he may be in for a half-dozen fights before the week is out, and we must give him fair-play, Mrs. Jobson, we must give him fair-play."

"Good gracious, Mr. Roger, is he going among savages?"

"No, Mrs. Jobson, but we are going to make a man of him."

Next day Dr. Jobson quietly took his boy at eight o'clock to the barber's, and Taddy dropping for ever the curls of infancy, walked up to school—having for the nonce little that the world could take hold of, except his large collar.

Before the end of the week Master Jobson came home one evening with his large collar crumpled and striped and plastered with crimson marks, the origin of which was evident from the swollen appearance of his nose. One eye, despite a skilfully applied "copper," *i.e.*, halfpenny, was closed and his trousers bore evidence of frequent rollings on mother earth. In fact he had fought with Frank Skirrow, a boy of thirteen, much stronger than himself, and despite a gallant assault had conclusively had the worst of it. Mrs. Jobson's anger was so great that she was on the point of scoring Master Taddy in other parts of his body with her riding-whip, but neither Dr. Jobson nor the Major would stand that. Jobson applied some simple surgical remedies to the boy's wounds.

"Did I not tell you," his mother said, "not to try to fight anything that was too strong for you?"

Master Taddy was very nearly crying. His finger was at his mouth, and he looked very sheepishly at his mamma, and glanced sidewise at the Major.

"Yes," he said, "but h—h—how can you find out until you've tried?"

Dr. Jobson and the Major could not restrain a hearty laugh, and Mrs. Jobson was obliged to look another way. The Major retreating with him to the wood-shed, gradually drew from him an exact account of the battle.

"You see, Mr. Grenville," said Taddy, "after school was over, a lot of us went down to the river to see a boat of Troutbeck's and another of Skirrow's. Skirrow had some gunpowder he was going to blow his up with after dark and we thought it would be great fun. Then when we got down some fellows found two young frogs, and Skirrow took them and put them in the bottom of his boat, and said he would blow them up with the boat. Don't you think it was cruel?—I said, 'No, don't do that, it ain't fair to the frogs.' Then all the fellows laughed and I got angry, you know, and Skirrow said I was a great baby. Then I said, 'Well, you shan't do it,' and I went to take the frogs out of the boat and he hit me first, a big round-hander, you know, just under the ear, and I fell down. Then they all cried out, 'A fight, a fight,' and I got up, and Troutbeck said, 'Leave him alone, Jobson, he's too big for you.' And I said, 'No, I'll fight him,' and he said, 'Well, then, little boy, give me your jacket.' Then I went and hit straight out and made Skirrow's nose bleed. And do you know he ran in and threw me, and tried to hit me after I fell, but all the boys cried shame! So I got up again and hit him in the eye. I don't know how often I hit him after that, because he went on hitting me in the ears and eyes with big round-handers and knocking me down ever so often and I did not know where I was. And then they called out, 'Davy's coming,' and so he and the rest of them ran away and it wasn't Mr. Roger after all."

"Bravo!" cried the Major. "Then you weren't beaten?"

"I should think not!" cried the boy.

"Then it was a draw. And he doesn't hit straight out from the shoulder, eh?"

"No."

"Well now, look here, Taddy, not a word to your mamma, mind. You must fight that fellow again, and I should like to be there to see fair-play. But mind this, he's only a head taller than you, and if he hits round, all you have to do is to take your fists, and as he comes at you hit right up so, do you see? right under the nose with all your force, and dodge your head down so, do you see? He'll not try many round-handers again after that," said the Major.

The boy watched the gallant gentleman as he went through the movements and nodded sagaciously.

Taddy did not appear at school for a day or two, and when he did the huge collar had been abandoned, and he wore a tidy slip which left his neck free play, and was not so likely to score his misfortunes. Skirrow and he did not speak, and it was well understood by all the boys that they were "bad friends." Our hero had already found an enemy.

One person suffered sadly from Taddy's new occupation. That was his aunt. She could not at first realise what it meant. At length she seemed to comprehend. Dr. Jobson, who expected some demonstration, watched her anxiously. Each morning after breakfast she saw Taddy take his satchel and go out: in the middle of the day he came home for an hour, and in the afternoon or evening he spent a couple of hours over his books. She said nothing, but one morning, when he was going to school, she appeared in her walking-dress and went with him. From that time morning and evening, she accompanied him to school and went to bring him home. One day as Taddy and she trotted off from the school, Master Skirrow and one of his cronies were standing on the door-step. They were watching the retreating pair.

"Boo," cried Master Skirrow. "Aint he a baby? he's got to be fetched, and by an ijiot too."

A smart box in the ear woke up all the electricity in Master Skirrow's brain and tumbled him off into the mud. He jumped up with an angry yell, and saw the flaming eyes of Davy Roger.

“Never let me hear you speak in that way again, sir, of that young lady, or I’ll kick you out of the school. You are a young cadger.”

Skirrow was frightened out of his wits by the tremendous wrath of the master as he said these words. He went off whimpering and vowing revenge on Taddy.

CHAPTER XVII.

STRANGE DOINGS IN CORNWALL.

SUMMER and autumn had gone by, the maples had cast their gorgeous mantles of crimson and gold; already had melting snow in casual drifts been seen softly thridding its way to the ground through the thin, naked branches of the trees; and in the morning the earth began to be hard with the early frost. But generally the sky above was clear, and a bright sun often shed down his cheerful rays on the decay of Nature.

Mr. Podgkiss was walking along the road that led to the school one afternoon of this autumn period, just about the time when the boys were let free, and he knew that the strong schoolmaster, stretching his big arms, blowing off the bad air of the school-room and expanding his chest with the purer atmosphere without, would be starting off at the rate of five or six miles an hour for his daily constitutional. Mr. Podgkiss went slowly, with his head bent, his hands behind his back, his bow-legs taking him a curvilinear course along the wooden pavement. As he went, he expectorated to right and left with the energy of a man who had for the moment conceived the design of spitting himself entirely away. He was yet some distance off from the school when he heard a cheer, and out of the broken gate of the yard—it was always broken—a rush of boys came down the road full pelt, their bags and satchels swinging behind them.

“Guess he’ll soon be along now,” said Mr. Podgkiss, as he stopped and leaned against a fence. “Hallo!” he went on, catching sight of a boy’s face, ruddy and fair, “that’s young Jobson—the young A-skinnyax!”

“Young Jobson” was running past him, and then Mr. Podgkiss became aware that he had been followed along

the wooden footpath by a young lady clad in a dark maroon costume, with a small felt hat. She was tripping lightly towards Master Taddy, and when she met him stooped and kissed his cheek.

"Lor' amighty, how nateral she is!" exclaimed Mr. Podgkiss. "Pretty as Japhet's daughter when she cum out to meet her father, with the other gals, and made him so pesky angry. Ah!" he continued, as Taddy and Bertha went on, "it's well for *her* she don't know all that's goin' on, and aint got the sense to care about it neither—by the great Jupiter here's the gallant son of Mars himself!"

Sure enough round the corner from beyond the school could be seen turning the figure of the Honourable Major Grenville, lounging along with the inevitable pipe in his mouth, as if in the most casual manner in the world, though it might have been seen every afternoon in precisely the same way, following Taddy and Bertha down the road. The Major's regularity was the amusement and amazement of the town. The Miss Fletchers, a little further on, used to dress up and sit in the window to watch him, and to exchange bows with the gallant officer, who never failed to look up to salute them, and in summer stopped sometimes to pass a word or two with them. The young ladies were tall, dark-eyed, pale-faced girls, always chewing spruce gum, very fond of dancing, exceedingly given to flirtation, and they had been educated in the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Montreal. The Major flirted with them as he had always done with women, but very mildly indeed, which had *not* always been his method. As luck would have it, just as the Major reached the open gate of the school-yard, out bounced Mr. David Roger, who, being a man of energy, set off from the door-step at his full pace. To-day as he was knitting his brow and thinking very hard he would have knocked Mr. Grenville over, had the officer not been an alert little man.

"Hallo, Mr. Dominie," said the Major, "attention! You very nearly ran me down, sir."

The school-master started at the voice and the figure before him, and his clear eye darkened and a shadow flitted over his face as he hastily stammered out an apology.

Major Grenville noticed the expression ; he had noticed a similar phenomenon several times since the memorable night when Mr. Roger had sung the song of "The Golden Maid." This song had never been repeated, but it had never been forgotten. A few days afterwards Cicely met the schoolmaster in the street. It was on a Sunday, and she stopped and shook hands with him. He looked into her fresh young face, with its saucy, lively expression, and own into her dark deep eyes.

"What song was that you sang the other night, Mr. Roger?" she said.

"From an old author," he replied, a little confused. "Did you not like it?" he added hastily.

"No, I did not," said Miss Spriggs tartly. "And I don't know why you sang it. What did you sing it for?"

"Why does one sing any song more than another, Miss Cicely?" said Roger, blushing again. He had no diplomacy.

"I guess you had some reasons," urged Cissy ; "tell me why you sang it?"

Roger recovered himself and looked at her stedfastly and gravely.

"Ah ! Cissy," he said, with a tender voice and a tender eye, "why do you ask me such a question? I wish you had a mother, Cissy," he added even more tenderly after a pause.

Cicely blushed and looked down.

"Good-bye, Mr. Roger," she said, recovering in a minute. "I can take care of *myself*, sir!"

And she tripped away.

Roger walked off into the country, ruminating all the way. "I was right," he said to himself a hundred times. "Why should she have asked me that question?"

After that David Roger had never missed a Wednesday evening at the Cornwall Inn. Major Grenville was very rarely there, and as for Cicely she appeared to greet the schoolmaster with her usual cordiality. Yet something dwelt in the schoolmaster's mind and lay upon his heart. He was in love with Cicely, but he felt it was a vain and an idle love. He sought to root it out of his heart, but it

would not come. It struck deeper and deeper. Yet he did not go about like a great moon-calf, walking where he hoped to meet her, gazing at the house in which she lived, staring to catch a glimpse of a flying skirt or a fluttering riband. That was not the manner of David Roger's love. It fed upon fancy within, and to keep it all alive and glowing it was enough to see her once a week. He smoked, and the while his eye lingered over her light movements, her neat figure ; or he gazed into those deep eyes which looked like unfathomable lakes ; or he held for an instant, while he thrilled and blushed, her little tickling fingers in his large palm ; but he saw and felt each time that there was neither thought nor touch for him. Deep and real as was his love he never allowed himself to be deceived. Never for a moment had Cicely by word or gesture given him the slightest reason to hope. Latterly indeed he had noticed a sort of shyness and coolness in her manner towards him, an almost imperceptible drawing away which only a lover's eye or feeling could have appreciated. Moreover, once he had seen something strange. Walking one evening after the sun had gone down along the bank of the river where it broadened out below the entrance to the canal, and gazing towards the islands which with their wooded shades lay out in a sea of greyish light, while nearer him and around the brighter space was a vast realm of dark water, in which objects were less distinctly seen, David Roger heard the sound of oars, and the tone of low voices came towards him across the swift glistening current. He strained his clear eyes hard to discern the craft and the passengers, but he could only detect a little floating thing a mile or more away which he felt sure must be painted white, otherwise he could not have seen it in that dark part of the water, and two figures in it, one lazily moving as at the oars. He thought he could see a white dress, and he fancied he could hear a voice clear as a bell, and a laugh joined in by two persons, one of whom was a man ; but the boat was far off, its occupants, if his ears did not deceive him, had lowered their tones, though he thought they could not possibly have observed him against the dark background of the bank and bush. David Roger did not like to give the

strange suspicion that awoke in his mind a resting-place there. The only little boat painted white, of which he knew, was Dr. Jobson's skiff. The only voice he knew that could speak and laugh so clearly was Cicely's. Who could have been with her? For it was certain that Miss Spriggs did not, like other Cornwall girls, make herself cheap by evening walks or rows with any of the young men about town. And we may say at once, in defiance of all artistic rules, that the person whom the schoolmaster that evening suspected was Major Grenville. It must be admitted that this was very hard on the Major. A more exemplary life than his had been since his arrival in Cornwall could scarcely have been imagined. Even Mrs. Troutbeck, who did not allow her girls to dance, asked him to her tea-parties, and allowed him to walk about with the young ladies quite freely. His flirtations at the balls which happened so often during the winter in Stormont and Glengarry were of the mildest, and his romantic devotion to Bertha seemed to every one to exclude every other possibility and to make of him a safe man. And yet two pair of quick eyes and two quick brains had detected relations between Grenville and Cicely which were more than merely formal and social. The one pair of eyes was that pair which, with a doubtful expression, has all this time been looking at the Major outside the schoolyard-gate. The other pair was waiting for him and for the schoolmaster a hundred yards off.

The day after Mr. Podgkiss had been refused by Cicely Spriggs, he had gone to Phœbe Clam. He dealt with her in a far less poetical and far more practical manner than with the young lady to whom he had given the preference, and Phœbe, a practical girl, with no pretensions either to youth or beauty, and with a very good training as a house-keeper, accepted him, and they were married within a week. Miss Spriggs went to the wedding, and congratulated Mr. Podgkiss in a way that made him tingle all over, and caused the green in his eyes to sparkle again.

When Mr. Podgkiss saw the meeting between the schoolmaster and the Major, he gave vent to an exclamation of disappointment, but seeing that they were coming towards him, he decided not to give way to his first inclination to

depart. Meanwhile the following sentences were being exchanged between the two men :—

“How is my friend Taddy Jobson getting on, Mr. Roger?”

“Cleverly, Major, almost too cleverly. You see, he’s beyond the other boys in a good many things, manners amongst them, and *savoir faire*, and the lessons are easy to him, and he knows it, feels it you see, and it’s apt to spoil him. He’s bold and bright, and self-conscious, and that makes him a little forward, but I have little to complain of, except an extra liveliness now and then.”

“Is he holding his own among the boys?”

“Ay, I saw him through the window the other day having it out with one of Mr. Fletcher’s lads beyond the lilac bushes over there, and he seemed to be doing very well. I hadn’t the heart to interfere with the little rascals,” said the schoolmaster, “and I wouldn’t tell it to any one else in town. You see, one has had many a mill in his time and was never the worse of it.”

The Major here looked up at his tall companion, and found that he was watching him keenly with those clear blue eyes. He felt a little annoyed. The two were talking in a friendly way, but there was something between them, something uncomfortable. By this time they had reached Podgkiss. The latter’s eyes had assumed a bottle-green hue, and his long, sly, thin lips were drawn down on either side as he approached them.

“What ho, Crispinus!” said the schoolmaster, glad to turn from the Major; “why have you left your bench and awls to wander forth in the evening air? Why, my Roman, thus only in your *semicinctum*? Where is your toga?”

Podgkiss was indeed in his apron and shirtsleeves, which were very dirty.

“I wanted to see you,” said Mr. Podgkiss, pallor getting the better of the leather colour of his cheeks, and his eyes changing like a chameleon. “Phœbe came to me an hour ago with some rare news. It ain’t got about the town yet, but old Spriggs is in a mortal state of mind. Cicely Spriggs ain’t to be found. She’s run off, p’raps drowned herself like Hero.”

The Major's face showed no feeling, though his eyes seemed to quiver for a moment, but the blood went and came in the cheeks of David Roger in a powerful flood. He gazed with a strong fire in his glance not at Podgkiss, but at Grenville, and Podgkiss's snaky eye also dwelt on the Major's face. For an instant Grenville caught the glance of both, and then he steadily looked at the schoolmaster. The latter's eyes were glowing, his chest was heaving, his big arms were trembling and his big fists were closing tightly. Grenville's cool look and manner and voice brought him to his senses.

"I don't believe it, Mr. Podgkiss," said the Major quietly. "I saw Miss Spriggs late last night, and she was perfectly well and busy as usual."

"*Where* did you see Miss Spriggs last night?" thundered David Roger, planting his two feet apart, with his two fists still moving nervously, his brows knit, his eyes glaring at the Major.

Grenville stepped back a step. The blood left his face, his look became dark, but he showed no other excitement.

"What do you mean, Mr. Roger, by addressing me in that way?" he said, with some dignity.

"No nonsense, sir, answer me! *Where* did you last see Miss Spriggs?" roared the schoolmaster.

David Roger's face was scarlet, his big chest was heaving up and down, and his features worked with uncontrollable passion. When such a man is face to face with another, woe betide that other if he allows himself to be outfaced. For an instant the Major's cheek was passionately white and his eye steady, but the fury of Roger's flame was consuming, and Grenville's glance began to give way. He affected to turn it off.

"I don't understand you, sir," he said, making as if to walk on. "You shall explain yourself when you have recovered your self-command."

He had not taken a step, when David Roger's big fist had seized the collar of his coat and turned him round again. Podgkiss held up his hand in a deprecating attitude, but the gesture was not seen.

"Hear me, Major Grenville. I have no proof—but I am as certain as you and I stand here before God, that you know more of this than you affect to know—and I call on you now, unless you would have me take the life out of you here in broad daylight, to tell the truth! Where is Cicely Spriggs?"

The man was beside himself. His powerful hand at each sentence shook all the breath out of Grenville's body with its terrible energy. His voice sounded far and his eyes flashed again.

At this moment the noise of wheels was heard, and of a galloping horse. Doctor Jobson's buggy drew up close to the group, the doctor shouted in a commanding voice:

"Stop there!"

And leaping from the buggy he rushed between Grenville and the schoolmaster. Crossing the road a few streets down he had heard Roger's voice and witnessed the assault. The Doctor was not only a powerful man—his glance was calm, his manner was commanding. He looked into the schoolmaster's eyes and conquered them. David Roger's hands unclasped, his arms dropped to his side, his head bent down. He heaved a great deep breath, shuddered, and then looked at the Doctor with an indescribable expression.

"Thank you, Doctor," he said feebly. And he grasped the Doctor's hand. "I had lost my wits for a moment, I believe," he added, looking round with a dazed air. Then he put his two arms out as if to feel for something, and, before Dr. Jobson could catch him, fell down on the road as if he had been shot.

Grenville, shaken and flustered, had not had time to recover his self-command, when the great frame that had so rudely handled him, lay at his feet bereft for the time of force and reason. Jobson knelt down and caught up the great curly head on his knee.

"Pull off this sleeve," he cried to Mr. Podgkiss, "Grenville—the case from the buggy there under the cushion, and then run to Fletcher's for some water."

In less than half an hour the schoolmaster was lying in Amelia Fletcher's bedroom, whither they had carried him, Major Grenville helping with all his might. To Miss

Amelia this incident was a romance, such as she was wont to dream of, and now that it had become reality, she had taken to it with a practical nerve which won the Doctor's approval. She cut off David Roger's strong hair in a twinkling and kept his brow cool with an iced lotion, and fairly vindicated herself from Mrs. Jobson's opinion once expressed of her and her sister—that "they would never be of any use in the world." Fortunately the Doctor did not consider the schoolmaster's stroke to be dangerous. He was weak but perfectly collected and able to speak. It was the hot passion of the blood which had for awhile suffused the brain, and was not one of those terrible convulsions of the nervous system which leave mind and body an irremediable wreck.

While Doctor Jobson had been attending to his patient, Mr. Morton of Moulinette was sitting outside Fletcher's door in his buggy, with two spirited and panting horses before him. He had driven hard, and he sent an urgent message upstairs for the Doctor. His heart was full of sadness when he heard from Mrs. Fletcher a wild and unauthentic account of what had taken place.

"Ay! ay!" he said to himself between his teeth. "Throw a big stone in a pool and how far the mud will rise!"

The Doctor had managed to get from Podgkiss an account of the interview between Grenville and Roger. He was thunderstruck. It seemed to his calm, steady mind as if all the world had gone mad. Cicely run away—Grenville accused of complicity—and Roger, the sedatest man in Cornwall, behaving like a lunatic! Doctor Jobson felt that the very bases of society were reeling and he himself was getting giddy. The information he received from Morton completed his confusion. Cicely had turned up. She was in the farmer's house at Moulinette.

"Get in, Doctor," the farmer said, "and we'll drive right down."

In the early morning, just as the cold daylight was beginning to peep about the farmhouse and creep over the trees, Mary Morton, carrying a large American pail in one hand and blowing the chilled fingers of the other, had

opened the kitchen door leading to the yard, across which, in the cow-house, the kine could be heard gently lowing their morning invitation to her to come and ease them of their rich loads. As she pulled it open a form fell in upon the floor with a slight scream. It had been huddled up resting against the door and now lay there, eyes shut and teeth chattering, face pale and drawn as the face of one dying.

Mary dropped her pail, threw up her hand, and gave a little cry.

"Cicely!"

Cicely's mother had been an intimate friend of Mrs. Morton, and the farmer's wife was the only person about Cornwall, or indeed in the world, who bore anything like a motherly relation to the motherless girl. Mary and Cicely, different as they were in character, were true friends: the one liked the quiet and sedate goodness of the other, just as the other was engaged and amused by her friend's sprightly and dashing manner. The Mortons never went to town without running in to see Cicely Spriggs, and she often spent a Saturday or a Sunday at the comfortable farmhouse.

With a quick woman's instinct of some sorrow, Mary stooped and, throwing her strong arms round Cicely, raising her and resting her head against her side, cried out in a lamentable voice:

"O what is this, Cicely? What does it mean?"

Cicely's head, all flaccid, had fallen against her friend's breast, and rested there. Her eyes remained shut and seemed to avoid the light even on the closed lids. Her teeth were grinding together. She felt with her free hand as if to caress her friend, to draw her to her and see if she were really flesh and blood, really had any love or sympathy for her. But she said nothing. And nothing would she say.

Mary called loudly for her mother, whom she knew to be moving in her room. The good woman came, and the two, being strong, carried the girl upstairs and laid her on Mary's bed. She knew what they were doing. She had not fainted. Mr. Morton's voice being heard on the landing asking what was the matter, she suddenly started up

and with a gesture seemed to beseech Mrs. Morton not to let him come in. Upon that the good dame, whose eyes had not been idle, motioned to Mary to leave the room and take her father away; and then she locked the door and undressed Cicely, who neither helped nor resisted, and put her in the warm bed—Mary's bed; and all the while she was doing this her kindly eyes were weeping gently and copiously.

“O Cicely! Cicely!”

The girl covered her face in her hands and turned it into the pillow and lay there crouched up, but said never a word.

Mrs. Morton opened the door and called Mary. She told her to bring some warm milk, and then to go on with the day's work and not to disturb her: that Cicely was not well, and that no one was to know she was there. She hoped after a while to learn something from the girl. For hours she sat by Cicely's side, her own grief being so great, that for the moment she forgot what an excitement the girl's absence must be creating at home.

When Mr. Morton came in to the midday meal, and found that his wife had not left the bedroom, he went up and called her out. By this time Cicely was in a fever, and talking wildly, and Mrs. Morton had heard a name which made her start and shudder. She had been applying cooling lotions to the head, but began to feel that the case was getting beyond her skill.

A few words passed between the husband and wife and the farmer's face grew dark and stern.

“Mary,” he said, “have you done right? Have you thought of our daughter—of our home we built ourselves out of the fresh virgin timber from the woods?”

He walked up and down in deep agitation, and Mrs. Morton quietly stood by watching him.

“Why did she come here?” he broke out. “Why did she come under this roof of all roofs? I must take her home to her father—instantly—at once. Why did you not call me before?”

The wife, with a pale face, a firm closed mouth, but mild eyes, stood regarding him, as he turned his kindling glance

towards her, reading every lineament of his face and watching every word from his lips.

"Sarah Spriggs, was a dear friend of mine, William," said she.

"Ay!" he answered chafing. "She was an honest woman. God be praised she is not alive to-day."

"William," said Mrs. Morton in a gentle tone, "you are the head of the household and as you say it shall be done. If you will carry the poor motherless bairn from under the shelter and away from the sympathy she has sought in her sorrow, let it be done. You always act from principle. But let us come and ask a blessing on it, William, as we ever do on all our works, and as we may well do if that be what the Lord would have us to do."

She put out her hand on his arm as if to lead him to the corner, where at the well-worn arm-chair they had been used to kneel together, claiming God's protection and guidance from morning to night and night to morning ever since that house had been built.

Morton did not look into his wife's face. He broke away and paced the room with uneven strides. Every now and then an exclamation escaped him. Mrs. Morton watched him anxiously. Some time elapsed. A terrible struggle was going on in the mind of the stern and rigid Presbyterian. She shut her eyes and put her hands together a moment, and then taking up a book, she sat down in the big arm-chair and opened on a well-known chapter.

"Dear husband, you are in a strait. Let us see what the Record says. Here. '*For if ye forgive men their*

trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.'

'Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.'" Then she

turned a few leaves and paused a moment. "*And he said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee. Go in peace, and*"

Here Mrs. Morton broke down completely, and sobbed, the tears trickling down upon the page and leaving a record that would last as long as the leaves held together.

"Mary," said Morton solemnly, as he stood in front of her, and gazed at her with a chastened look, "I feel that

you are right. But this is the greatest sorrow, the darkest cloud that ever entered this house. We have buried our best and bravest but all without shame, all with hope. Only our dear Mary remains, who never knew aught but of a pure life and of pure thoughts. Is it not terrible to think what a secret you have shut up in her room? It is a visitation of God to us that this should seek our door. Surely we have grieved Him and must humble ourselves."

The poor man's face wore an expression almost of anguish.

"Not so, William," said Mrs. Morton in a firm strong tone, as she rose and laying her hand on his shoulder looked at him eye to eye, "do not twist the meaning of God's ways like that! The true test-word here is this, my own soul persuades me thereof, and let yours assure you: '*Forasmuch as ye have done it unto the least*'—ay, and unto the worst—'*of these little ones, ye have done it unto Me.*'"

"Mary," said William Morton gently, drawing his wife to his breast, and kissing her on the forehead, "do as God directs you, and His blessing rest upon you."

He went away.

But when Mrs. Morton returned to the room where Cicely lay, there were Mary and Cicely weeping in each other's arms. The mother clasped her hand to her heart. A sharp pain had gone through it. She was on the point of running forward to drag her child away. She had almost called out.

"My poor dear Cicely!" sobbed Mary.

The softness, the love and the anguish of her child's voice struck new chords in the mother's heart. She went up and put her arms round the two girls, and the three women wept together.

* * * * *

When Dr. Jobson went in to his wife with his budget of melancholy news she too felt that this was a personal calamity. So widely did it strike and so deeply. She had often seen Cicely, and rather liked the girl. There was a dash and decision about her that attracted Marian. But something went suddenly through Marian's heart when she

heard the story. Had any names been mentioned? None, except that the schoolmaster in a wild fit had charged Grenville, the first person he met. Where was Grenville? After helping to carry Roger, he had gone away from the Fletchers', presumably to the Inn.

"Go down and see," said Mrs. Jobson decisively. "Has any one been to old Mr. Spriggs yet?"

"No."

"Then you and Mr. Morton must go and tell him. My dear, dear husband, preserve your coolness. Everything depends on you."

Down through the High Street, where people were standing about in groups along the pavement and at the entrances of the stores, dashed Farmer Morton's buggy with the Doctor, up to the door of the Cornwall Arms. The door was shut. Mr. Sprigg would do no business. People were out looking for Cicely, and he sat brooding inside. The Doctor learned this from the bystanders. Podgkiss only had been admitted.

"Has Major Grenville gone in?" asked Jobson.

"No."

By dint of hard knocking, Morton brought Podgkiss to the door, and, saying he had news of Cicely, was admitted along with the Doctor. In the bar-room, in his coat-sleeves, sat Mr. Spriggs, looking straight before him. He glanced a moment at his visitors, and motioned to them to sit down. His lips parted and they could see he was asking something but they could hear no sound.

"Mr. Spriggs," said Doctor Jobson, "Mr. Morton has news of Cicely."

Podgkiss standing, shoved his neck forward and his eyes glowed as he stared at Morton.

"Alive or dead?" said Spriggs, turning his sharp eye, which had quickened in a moment, on Morton.

"Alive," said Mr. Morton solemnly, "but—" he stopped.

"Dyin'?" cried Mr. Spriggs.

"No—not dying, but—"

"Doctor Jobson," he said, angrily turning away from the farmer, "tell me quickly. That old fool will take a week over it."

"So far as her body goes, her life I believe is perfectly safe, though I am now going to see. She is not well. The rest she ought to tell you herself. Will you go down to Moulinette with us?"

Mr. Spriggs's eyes flashed again. Something also seemed to flash across his mind. He glanced at Podgkiss, and then rose and with an uncertain step approached the Doctor and whispered in his ear.

Doctor Jobson nodded.

"Then," said the man aloud between his teeth, and bringing his fist down on the palm of his hand, "let her be damned. I'll not go near her."

His face was white. He staggered back to his chair and sat down.

"Give me some brandy, Podgkiss." It was brought and he drank off a draught. The Doctor did not interfere.

"Do you know who it is that has brought this—this shame on my home and my dead wife?"

Both men shook their heads. The green eyes of Podgkiss glared at them. He was expecting an answer and was disappointed.

"I thought you mought a known, Mr. Morton," he could not forbear from saying.

"You mind your own business, Mr. Podgkiss," said the landlord sternly. "Don't you interfere in my family affairs. Gentlemen," said Mr. Spriggs rising, and stretching himself up, while he stuck his thumbs into his waistcoat in the old familiar fashion, and with a jerk of his head threw his long hair back from his forehead,—“Gentlemen, all I ask of you is that when a name is mentioned you will let me know. As to her,” he added, drawing his breath in between his teeth, “I want to hear and see nothing more of her as long as God gives me life. Thank you for your kindness. Mr. Morton, forgive an angry man for a hasty word. Now, Mr. Podgkiss, will you have the goodness to open the door and to tell the people that business is resumed, while I go upstairs a minute.”

He strode to the door and could be heard running up the stairs. Morton and the Doctor exchanged glances. There was fear in their faces. They followed him. As they went

up they could hear the crowd surging into the bar-room. At the top of the stairs was Mr. Spriggs's room. The door was open. Spriggs was standing with a tall rifle in his hand and was ramming down the bullet. He did not start however.

"Don't be alarmed, gentlemen," he said; "don't be afraid that Joram Spriggs is going to make a fool of himself. I'm only getting ready for contingencies," he added with a ghastly smile. "Now it's ready. You come along with me."

They followed him down again to the room, which was nearly full. The roar of voices was hushed when Spriggs appeared carrying his rifle. He entered his bar and quietly hung the weapon on two nails behind it.

"Friends and neighbours," he said in a hard, cracked voice, his bright eyes dancing over the excited faces that crowded around him, "this bar is opened again for business as usual, and will be attended to by me till I get some suitable person to take charge of it. The late barmaid has left it—for ever. I give you all fair warning that rifle's loaded. If any man mentions her name in this place again he'll go out of that door with daylight let clean through him. Now, Solomon Wakefield, you're nighest I reckon, what'll you take to drink?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

JUDGE LYNCH ON THE RAMPAGE

IT was nearly nine o'clock, and the night dark and murky, when Doctor Jobson reached home after his long drive from Moulinette. Marian Jobson had sent away the evening cases to Doctor Skirrow, and was waiting for her husband with a comfortable supper. Before going home he visited Roger, whom he found quite calm and apparently scarcely any the worse of the odd turn he had taken. Indeed the schoolmaster had been insisting on getting up and going home; and it was only by staying in the room and thus rendering it rather awkward for him to dress, that Amelia Fletcher had been able to keep her patient under her control. The Doctor thought that there were still some traces of cerebral excitement, and begged that the treatment he had begun with might be continued through the the night if only as a precaution. Miss Fletcher having told Mr. Roger that Cicely had been found, he was eager to question the Doctor about it; but the latter shook his head and begged him to wait until the morning.

The story Jobson had to tell his wife made her wring her hands. Cicely had gone through her trial, but was not a mother. There seemed to be some small grain of comfort in that. But while she had been delirious, as she still was, for she was suffering from a dangerous fever, she had repeatedly uttered one name—and when the Doctor told it to Marian she smote her hands together and groaned out:

“Oh! Impossible—impossible, dear Arthur. *Impossible.*” She was trying to persuade herself with these vain repetitions.

“Marian,” said Jobson sententiously, “nothing is impossible to human beings. The unexpected and the

impossible are always happening. I have been thinking about it," he continued, "all the way home. This is a strange mystery this human nature of ours. We read together lately that article in the *Edinburgh* on 'Habit.' Habit is as powerful on sense as on mind—on mind as on sense. Education is largely the formation of habit. Vices are often habits. They have grown when the nature was a tender and flexible sapling—they remain in the body of the tree, in the bark, in the infirm direction of its growth, through all its after-life. Grenville was a loose, even a profligate youth, and by no means a steady man. Undoubtedly an immense change came over him when—you know when. The shock of that event completely sobered him, and so far as he had any resolutions they were all good, and he—well for the time he yielded to them. I was always afraid of doing him an injustice, but I have watched him all these years with fear and trembling. I knew he had no steadiness in his nature. His odd, romantic, persistent fancy for poor Bertha seemed to have in it something so pure and quaint that I half-persuaded myself that it was ennobling his character, and had at least made of him a new creature. What it might lead to, if she ever became as we hope against hope she may, I dreaded to think, for friendly as we were with him, I could never had contemplated with any comfort the possibility of any permanent relations between Bertha and him. Now consider—this man with his habits, his principles, his education you may call it, for there is a negative as well as a positive education, foolishly breaks away from professional life, the best society, and military discipline, and possessed with a fanciful passion which was fed only by looking from day to day on a person who was incapable of making any response whatever to it, comes and lives in this miserable little town—with its petty and wretched society. He has no root of religion in him, he is not a profound thinker or a deep reader, he is an idler—he lounges and moons about year after year. He is an 'Honourable,' and externally at least a gentleman, and not bad-looking. Can we be surprised at what has happened? Poor Cicely was a dashing, attractive girl, and I have

learned that the schoolmaster's suspicion was correct—she was madly in love with Grenville. Mary Morton had warned her about it."

Marian looked at her husband with some wonder. While he spoke the creases seemed to smooth out of his tired face, and his expression had become thoughtful and animated.

"It is all very well," said his wife rising and putting her hand fondly on his brow and looking into his eyes,—“it is all very well to treat the affair *en philosophe*, but you cannot diminish its actual horror, or excuse his wickedness."

"No," replied Jobson, "not in the least; but then you must remember that is not the business of philosophy. The principles of forgiveness and redemption come from another source. Grenville's is a low and a horrible crime, unpardonable if there be no repentance. But it is of the nature common to men,—of which, alas! I see so much. For my part nevertheless I can never forgive him. He has deceived us all—this wrong to poor Cicely is irremediable."

At this moment they were disturbed by a ring at the bell of the front door. The servant opened it. A man's voice was heard, which sent a thrill through their bosoms, the parlour-door was pushed inwards, and Grenville, with haggard face and bloodshot eyes, his dress disordered and muddy, staggered into the room and threw himself on a chair. He covered his face with his hands.

Mrs. Jobson drew herself up, and Doctor Jobson rose from his seat. His face was dark, but he looked towards, rather than at, the miserable figure before him and hesitated to speak. Mrs. Jobson, without a word, made as if to leave the room. Doctor Jobson caught her arm and detained her. They exchanged glances. They looked at Grenville. It was too terrible. Was it possible that this poor wreck was their jolly little visitor of the morning, the favourite companion of Taddy, their children's friend? Marian shuddered as this thought crossed her mind. She pressed Jobson's arm and threw him a glance entreating him to speak.

"Major Grenville" said Doctor Jobson, coldly,—he had always called him "Grenville,"—"what brings you here?"

"You guess," said Grenville in a weak voice out of his hands, "You suspect."

"Pardon me," replied Jobson. "I cannot conceive why you should come here; indeed," he went on with sternness in his tone, "I don't understand your forcing yourself into this room and upon Mrs.—upon Mrs. Jobson and myself. You must feel that the things which have come to light to-day have put an end to any intercourse between us."

"What?" said Grenville. "Do you know anything? I came here to tell you,—to tell you all."

They looked at him. His hair and clothes were wet.

"I know all, Major Grenville. Cicely is found."

"Cicely found!" cried Grenville, jumping to his feet, and gazing wildly at the Doctor. "Cicely found! Is she living and well?"

"She is alive. She could hardly be well. Some one has robbed her of the most precious jewel a woman can wear."

"Thank God she is alive!" cried Grenville clasping his hands. "Her death then does not lie to my charge O Jobson, Jobson!" said the poor man going on his knees and looking up at them with agony in his face, "our friendship I know is at an end—it's all over between us. But is there nothing—nothing I can do to atone for this? Since I left you this morning I have endured the horrors of the damned. I took your boat and went over to the island. I wandered about in the bush. I tried to drown myself in the rapids above the island, but the eddy washed me in ashore again. I felt sure she had killed herself. Now—Jobson—Mrs. Jobson—I implore you for God's sake have some pity on me and tell me what to do. I'll go and kill myself if you don't help me."

The Honourable Eden Grenville was certainly a sorry spectacle, and Marian looking down upon him felt her pity awakened. She was clinging to her husband's arm and trembling. Her face was white and full of pain.

"Major Grenville," said Dr. Jobson hardly, "are you in earnest or is this merely an aristocratic fit of the blues?"

Marian Jobson looked at her husband with surprise. She had never seen him so stern.

"Before God I am in earnest. I'll do anything you say. I can never recover your esteem, but at least I may have your pity."

"Pity!" cried Jobson contemptuously. "Pity for a man who has wrecked a poor girl's happiness, and caused a sorrow so widespread as you have done. What do you think of poor Roger, a man worth ten of you, lying there with his head shaved and his heart broken? What do you think of Mr. Spriggs, converted from a quiet citizen into a cynical savage? What do you think of this home where you came and were welcomed like a brother, and—and like an uncle, darkened—injured, I was going to say by the memory of your association with it? And what of the poor girl you have wronged, sir—who has given birth to a dead child and is now lying dangerously ill? Will tears wipe all that out, think you? What *can* you do?"

Jobson spoke loudly and passionately, and his wife was frightened at his unwonted vehemence. Grenville sank down on the floor even on his face, and shuddered while the pitiless storm of words beat down upon him. There was silence for the space of an minute.

Then Marian's clear voice gently sounded through the room.

"One reparation you *can* make, Major Grenville," she said. "I speak as a woman. You can at least make of Cicely Spriggs your lawful wife."

Jobson turned towards her wonderingly. Strange that this simple idea had not occurred to him.

At this moment they were all startled by a sound which came from the front of the house. It was a sound of many voices harsh and frightful—a howling which made the blood curdle. Doctor Jobson ran to the front door. When he opened it a strange spectacle met his eye. In the broad road in front of his garden, a large fire had been built, over the fire swung on three sticks an iron pot, from which thick smoke ascended, and the odour which prevaded the air indicated that it was pitchy. Round this moved a number of persons, some carrying pillow-cases, filled with feathers. Two men bore on their shoulders an enormous rail, triangular and sharp as a razor on its upper edge. There were



"Will you wipe all that out, thank you? What can you do?"

about a hundred people in the road and garden. Some of them carried torches, and in the flaring light he could see that their faces were blackened. No sooner was Jobson's door opened than several men rushed forward.

"What does this mean?" shouted Jobson. "Are you all mad?"

"No, Doctor Jobson," answered a voice from the crowd, which sounded remarkably like that of Ephraim Podgkiss. "I reckon we ain't neither mad nor drunk. We are the new jestices of the peace for the township of Cornwall. We ain't goin' to harm you or touch a hair of your head, but we are ordered to produce before Judge Lynch, dead or alive, the Honourable Eden Grenville, and he's in your house, so please bring him out."

"What!" said Jobson. "Barbarians! do you think if I had him here I would give him up to you?"

Two big men here came close to the door and stationed themselves on either side of the Doctor.

"Noo then, Dochter," said one of them, "it's nae use. He's been tracked in through this door, and we maun hae the man. We've nought agen you, Dochter, and we'd be vera sorry to frighten the wife and the bairns, but Meejor Grenville we'll hae, and ye maun gie him up. It's Judge Lynch that demands him, and Judge Lynch takes no refusal."

Doctor Jobson stepped back quickly and tried to close the door, but the big foot of the Scotchman with an immense shoe on it was quickly jammed in, the door was pushed open and the two giants seized Jobson one by either arm and dragged him out. He was powerless.

At this moment Major Grenville, followed by Marian, who was wringing her hands, walked out of the door.

"Here is Major Grenville," he shouted. "Leave go of Doctor Jobson. What do you want with me?"

A fearful yell came from the crowd. They broke in over the palings and filled the garden.

Through the window upstairs Master Taddy, tumbled out of bed in a fright, stood spellbound watching all that then took place. It was a scene to be written on his memory for a lifetime.

Taddy's friend, the Major, with his disordered hair and dress, stood out there bareheaded in the light, a little fellow, facing the black-visaged crowd, which for a moment, struck by his boldness, formed a ring about him and held back.

"What do you want with me?" he repeated.

"Where is Spriggs's daughter?" said a voice.

"She is alive," shouted Jobson. "She is alive and safe at Mr. Morton's, at Moulinette. I have just come from there."

The crowd seemed thunderstruck at these tidings, and the men began to converse with each other in low tones, as if in doubt what to do.

"Safe, eh?" said a clear sarcastic voice, well delivered through the nose. "Who tuk her to Moulinette then?—eh, Meejor Grenville?" and a face well-blackened, out of which two green-coloured eyes flashed on the Major, came up very close to his. "Do *you* know anythin' about it, Meejor? Gentlemen," the voice went on, "most of you was in Spriggs's bar this afternoon when he disowned his daughter—warn't you?"

"Yes, yes!"

"What did he disown her for? Because a milingtary aristocrat thought he could play the same game with a respectable Cornwall gal, as he had done with the elegant ladies of the English aristocracy. What du you say? Shall we teach the milingtary aristocrat a lesson or shall we let him off?"

"Give him a lesson," shrieked the crowd, and they ran upon Grenville.

The first man that touched him went down with a blow in his eye, and the Major would have proceeded to lay about him gallantly, had not an Indian who had thoughtfully provided himself with a deer-hide noose slipped it over the little man's shoulders and drawing his arms tightly to his sides knotted the noose securely. This act was received with frantic yells of delight, and seizing the end of the thong they roughly pulled the Major to and fro. Marian and the Doctor looked sadly on from the doorstep, where their two huge guards entreated them to remain quiet.

"Now then get the paint and feathers," shouted the crowd, and they dragged Grenville to the road. The

Doctor thereupon made a valiant charge to get out, but he was tripped by the Scotchman, who picked him up and put him back again like a baby, saying :

“Lie still noo, Dochter—there’s naething agen you. He’s no worth yer interventions, man. Mistress Jobson, for God’s sake, go inside.”

Jobson saw it was useless to make any effort, and entreating his wife to retire was forced to remain a silent spectator. The circle now surrounded the fire, which lit up their wild forms and faces. Three or four men having half-stripped him held the Major tightly, for he struggled violently though not a scream escaped from his lips. Two black-faced demons with shirt sleeves rolled up, now dipped in the hot pitch large sticks with mops at the end and were in the act of taking them out of the boiling mess, when a shout was heard—a tremendous shout from tremendous lungs, and the crowd, with cries of astonishment and fear, gave way on either side. Through them with long leaps, flourishing an immense stick, there dashed into the centre of the ring an extraordinary figure. It was a big man, his hair cut down to a half-inch, dressed in nothing whatever except a night-shirt too short for him and a pair of long boots.

“Davy Roger !” screamed the crowd.

The schoolmaster was abroad.

David Roger, having resigned himself to the necessity, not a very painful one, of lying in a comfortable bed, rather short for him it is true, and being tenderly tended by the black-eyed Amelia, was dozing in a half-dream, while Amelia, who had donned a black dress she had been accustomed to wear at the convent and a white cap, and wore a black cross suspended from her neck, sat in a corner tatting, having shaded the candle from the patient’s eyes. Amelia felt very happy—this was such *real romance* : and it seemed so funny to have a big man to nurse, and to be sitting there listening to his deep breathing, and to feel that she had laid him under a life-long obligation. These and other thoughts and many fancies went through Amelia’s busy mind while she plied her busy fingers. The night without was quiet. There was no wind, and a solemn stillness was brooding over the town. Suddenly

she was startled by a roar which seemed to come along the street and shake the windows as it went by. It was heard below, and as Amelia rushed to the landing window, Mr. Fletcher and others ran to the front door. The noise awakened Roger out of his doze and he sat up and listened attentively. Through the open door and windows now came the yells of the distant crowd.

"What is it, papa?" cried Miss Amelia from above to her parent who had gone out into the road to take an observation. Mr. Fletcher was of opinion that it was a fire. Young Fletcher had sped off like a greyhound to pick up the news. He was not gone many minutes. Terror and excitement lent him wings home again. Amelia meantime had gone back to the sickroom and was begging the patient to remain quiet, when the shrill voice of the boy could be heard shouting to his father :

"O father ! There's a mob at Doctor Jobson's house, and they're going to tar and feather Major Grenville."

The words came clearly through the window just outside Roger's bedroom door. In an instant, without the slightest regard for Miss Amelia's feelings, he threw off the clothes, jumped from the bed, ran to his long boots neatly ranged by the neat spinster alongside the chair which bore his clothes, dragged them on, and without waiting to add any other garments, while Amelia screamed and covered her eyes, he bolted downstairs, and out into the garden. Seizing a pole which was used to prop a clothes-line he dashed through the little gate and tore down the road like a madman. Thus he appeared on the scene just as the first coat was about to be applied to the Major's back.

"What are you going to do?" he thundered out to those who held Grenville.

"We're goin' to give him a new coat," said a voice ; "and then ride him round town on a wooden horse, as becomes a galliant knight of his sort."

It was Podgkiss who spoke.

"Let him go !" shouted Roger, his strong manly voice carrying on the night air and vibrating in the ears of the crowd.

"No, no, schoolmaster," said a powerful man, with his bare arms, as well as his features, black as coal. He flourished the mop charged with tar. "Hold him still, boys—here goes."

And sure enough here went. Davy Roger's pole with a crush knocked the stick into two pieces. The mop fell on the ground—the other end was instantly flourished by the town blacksmith. Parrying the stroke with his pole, David Roger delivered straight out with his left fist a blow that sounded all over the place and sent the blacksmith to earth like a log, and he lay there.

"Down with him!" they cried, and a number of men rushed at the schoolmaster, but one sweep of his formidable pole sent them all back again.

"Cowards and dastards!" he panted out. "Are you going to introduce these cursed Yankee fashions on English ground?"

"*You* jest mind your own business and go home," said a nasal voice from behind.

Podgkiss thought he was in a safe place; but, with one bound, Roger made for him, the crowd scattered, and, giving Podgkiss a buffet with his open hand, he settled it once and for all in that gentleman's mind and head that it was not his *forte* to act as executioner for Judge Lynch. The crowd however was getting angry. Attempts were made to assail the schoolmaster from behind, and he received two or three ugly blows. But he had grown cool and alert. Running to the men who held Grenville, he knocked one down with his pole, and, the others giving way, he seized the Major by the thong that bound him and, throwing him over his shoulder with the left hand, he prepared to fight his way out. At this moment a commanding voice shouted, "Clear the way." The Mayor of the town, accompanied by its two policemen, Dr. Troutbeck, the Catholic priest, and several other respectable gentlemen, marched into the circle. There was instant quiet.

"I order this crowd to disperse," said the Mayor. "The soldiers are ready to march out of barracks when I fire this pistol, and in two minutes I shall fire it. And whoever

is engaged in rioting or remains on the ground must take the consequences."

Before he had finished, a large proportion of the crowd had begun to slink away. Jobson's two guards jumped over the palings and disappeared. The doctor went out towards the group which was now surrounding David Roger. He had dropped Grenville, and one of the police had promptly cut the cord which confined him. Dr. Troutbeck took the Major's arm and supported him.

Roger in his scanty costume, running with perspiration, and weak with the reaction from his excitement, leaned upon his victorious pole, a spectacle which brought a smile on the Mayor's face.

"Mr. Roger," he said, "you have done nobly, and saved our town from a great disgrace. But, my dear sir—don't you—don't you think—are you not afraid that you will catch cold?"

CHAPTER XIX.

REPENTANCE AND RESTITUTION.

THE hair of David Roger had grown again. Once more the rough, strong locks stood proudly above his pale forehead and curled over his great ears, and caressed his brawny neck. His blue eyes shone with their old clearness, his voice was full and deep-toned as ever. But over David Roger's face had come a change which was plain to all the boys. It was a gentle chastening of the features. There was not the same ever-living smile that used to play round the large mobile mouth, and lurk in the corners of the eyes. An unseen hand seemed to have powdered his face with sadness, increasing, it is true, its gentleness—and the sadness had fallen on the man's whole being. With the quick instinctive sympathy of young hearts, nearly the whole school noticed the change in David, and little understanding what it meant, though they knew something of the events which had stirred Cornwall to its very core, the boys were very quiet and tender to him, all except the hopeless miscreant, Tom Skirrow. It indeed became the habit and tradition of the school in that generation of boys, to love and be kind to "big Davy Roger." He had been ill and away for some little time from Cornwall and had come back as they now saw him.

Taddy Jobson, whose heart was open to deep sympathies, was singularly drawn to the schoolmaster. Davy noticed it. A little pressure of the hand whenever the boy could shyly slip his fingers into his—a big apple or a luscious pear lying on his desk when he came in of a morning, with a pair of bright eyes waiting and watching to catch the smile on his face as he took it up and inhaled its fragrance, and said shily—"Fine fruit—I thank the unknown giver:" a look of wondering sympathy beaming on him from the boy's

desk, when Davy sometimes, leaning his head on his hand at his own seat, affected to be engaged in revising the school-list or correcting compositions, while his thoughts wandered away to something sorrowful, and pain grew in his face and shot about there as shadows over the corn, and its former lightness seemed to be darkened. At such a moment, David Roger, if he happened to look up, and somehow he was often glancing up towards Taddy's desk, would catch the boy's grey-blue eyes fixed upon him with a half-wondering half-sorry expression.

Then the schoolmaster would rouse up with a little flush and would say :

"Jobson, go on with your work, sir."

Taddy thereupon would blush like a girl, and turn to his task, furtively glancing now and then at the master to see if he was still observing him.

The great void which had been created in the master's heart was so wide and deep that it seemed impossible it could ever be filled up. It was not the mere being, Cicely, which had vanished—it was the ideal of a pure and holy love, of a noble and worshipful character. Within the small circle of David's experience, his strong mind and stronger heart, had never come in contact with any more charming ideal or reality. It had become set in his affection as a rich stone in the gold—and when it dropped out there was nothing to fill up the ugly void. In his consciousness this void had a terrible fascination. He sought to look away from it but could not. Will was gone ; and the soul would stand and writhe and wring itself with pain, at the recollection of the lost form. The magnetic influence of Taddy's presence and Taddy's sympathy was not lost on David. It was almost the only soothing influence in his life. When he became conscious of it he tried to break away from its power—but it was the need of his being and he could not. The boy made him love. him. He only could draw away the master's glance for a time from that terrible emptiness within.

With Taddy and David the concord of feeling in their hearts was the truer and deeper that it was unexpressed. Thus the man and boy became friends. The boy was

lively, the man was passionate and quick. To Skirrow sometimes, when the lad went beyond all bounds, as his low nature often made him do, Roger could be almost brutal, taking him out, and giving him six on his hands with all his force with the leather *tawse*, until Master Skirrow howled and curled up like an agonised worm. But volatile Taddy, nervously restless and chattery, qualities most trying to David Roger, used to come off scatheless.

"Jobson, sir! Jobson!" he would cry out in a beseeching voice, "do be quiet! You know I *can't* beat ye, man!"

After all, Davy was human, and pure justice is most inhuman.*

The affair of Cicely had effected a revolution in Cornwall life. A stir had been made in the dull, dead waters and not only a stir but a division. Just as Taddy, getting on to eleven years of age was beginning to awaken to the meaning of things that were occurring in society about him, he found himself swept into one of the currents and borne along with it.

Cornwall had lost; the Major. The Fletchers, the Troutbecks, the Latouches had to mourn the absence of the only scion of the aristocracy ever known to have resided in the place. Lieutenant Manley, a young gentleman in command of the small detachment which held the barracks, a rather shy and simple-hearted fellow, whose parentage was not satisfactory to either Mrs. Latouche or Mrs. Jobson, missed

* This is the only bit of autobiography I have allowed myself in this tale. Dear old Davy! *My* Davy Roger was a Scotchman, such a man as the one depicted in the text: and when I was an ugly, chattering, restless urchin, far up in the classes but in conduct the most mischievous boy in the school, the *bête noir* of all the six masters, Davy, who had a wonderful kindness for me,—he was a married man though and without any special sorrows—again and again besought me to restrain my untimely restlessness.

"J—, man! *Do* be quiet. Ye know I can't hit ye "

A marvellous good teacher was Davy Roger, forcing the wholesome learning down the throats of the sullen, and feeding the willing with it as with pap, in all joy and tenderness. The grass grow green on thy grave, O strong and gentle master!—ED.

almost the only one man with whom he cared to exchange courtesies. Grenville had indeed permanently departed.

A week after his escape from the rough handling of Judge Lynch's executioners, Grenville and Cicely Spriggs had been married in Mr. Morton's house at Moulinette, and had gone off to Peterborough, from which place he intended in the Spring to seek a home amidst the rich and beautifully wooded country in the direction of Lake Simcoe, which was already beginning to be taken up by emigrants, some of very respectable families.

Doctor Troutbeck had performed the ceremony and Doctor Jobson and Mr. Morton and his wife and daughter were the only witnesses. When it was over, the two women having left the room to prepare a meal, Doctor Jobson took Grenville's hand and drew him into a corner.

"Grenville," he said, "Marian and I wish you to feel that we are friends again. This of yours is a just act of reparation—in many respects a sacrifice, but it was one called for by the circumstances, and you have acted like a man in coming up to the call. I trust it is more. We think and we hope that Cicely may prove to be a woman not unworthy your affection. During these few days, my friend, you have passed through the experience of many years—perhaps at the end of it you find yourself a somewhat different man. Forgive me, if I speak honestly—at such a time true friendship can only be candid. You have broken, painfully, but I hope thoroughly—with the past. For you now there is no romance : and sentiment would be folly. The realities of life must come very clearly home to you, with a young wife, new associations, a wholly changed—though I do not see why it need be a wholly broken—career. I daresay your friends at home may throw you over. You have done without them a long time and can still survive their indifference. But my dear Grenville we will regard and respect you more than ever—I assure you—I speak Marian's own words—'more than ever.' You can rely on our friendship even more than you could have done before."

Grenville, who had been looking on the ground and suppressing his emotion, covered his face with one hand and

pressed Dr. Jobson's hand tightly with the other. A terrible struggle was going on within him. The words meant in kindness had gone like darts through his whole being.

Cicely, pale and anxious, standing and trying to talk with Doctor Troutbeck and Morton, had been watching with her quick, dark eyes the interview in the corner. The few days had altered her also strangely. It was no longer the dashing, saucy, innkeeper's daughter who stood there : but a woman, with a certain dignity in her carriage, and a chastened gravity on her pretty features. She was dressed in a dark serge travelling suit and a black hat with a feather which became her well.

Leaving her companions she quickly crossed the room to the spot where Jobson and her husband were standing. There was anguish in her face. She put a hand on one of Grenville's shoulders and laid her head on the other. She was trembling.

"Eden, Eden!" she cried. "What is it? Oh! my God, you are sorry—sorry you have married me!"

What could he answer?

He did not speak. He did not lift his head or return her caress.

There was a painful pause.

Cicely was sobbing.

Jobson beckoned to the other two gentlemen and they all left the room. He wisely felt that no friendly interposition could solve the sorrowful difficulty of this scene. They waited in the other room conversing in whispers, and thinking that on this interview hung the happiness of two lives.

Half an hour elapsed—three quarters—the listeners were getting more gloomy and impatient. No one spoke. Suddenly the door opened, and Grenville and Cicely came in. She was clinging tightly to his arm. There was sorrow in the pale face, on her cheeks a tear or two still glistened, but the eyes shone with a certain triumph. Grenville had grown calm and he drew the girl closely to his side. Perhaps it was the first time in his life that he had gone through a great struggle to complete self-conquest.

"Mrs. Morton," he said gravely, "let me present you to Mrs. Grenville."

Cicely started and looked at him. It was the first time she had heard her new name uttered. It was spoken by *him*. She threw herself upon Mrs. Morton's neck.

All this time William Morton's face had worn a look of gloom. Now he shook his head. "Ah!" he said aside to Doctor Troutbeck, "this is not a sad enough ending to such a sin."

"Well, I don't see that, my dear sir," replied the Dean. "I have never learned that God accepts repentance and restitution with an afterthought."

The good man looked at the Doctor with a startled expression. He seemed to feel this too daring a sentiment for a mortal to utter.

"Ay!" he said, looking at the Dean compassionately. "I doubt you're but imperfectly acquainted with the Confession of Faith."

"Never even saw it, my good sir," replied the Dean, good-temperedly, "but I know well the Bible from which, I believe, it professes to be taken; and I am sure you and I can agree in thinking the extent of God's mercy and tenderness to be far beyond our conception."

But Morton still shook his head. Like an ant in a circle of chalk, he was afraid to step beyond the lines which he believed the founder of the Church of Christ had scored around him.

For the two principals it seemed, at all events for the present, as if repentance had wrought its healing effects. They would go away, and a mature and honourable affection might ripen from the evil sowing of unlawful love. Could the drama thus have been closed, the history wiped out, the memories have been for ever stifled and all those who had been wronged and outraged be restored to their old position and old feelings, then indeed might it have been called restitution. But the old ordination of the mysterious power that rules the world is otherwise. Circles of human beings remain under the shadow of an evil from the sorrows of which the perpetrators have passed.

Grenville had married Cicely Spriggs; but Spriggs' rifle still hung behind the bar, and no one ventured to utter within the hearing of the landlord his daughter's name.

One day before the marriage, meeting the innkeeper in the street, Mr. Morton made an effort to approach him on the subject by telling him what Grenville proposed to do. Spriggs listened with gravity. The event had made him saturnine. He used to stand at his bar day by day serving out spirits to the curious people who thronged it—but only a monosyllable now and then passed his lips.

Now he spoke.

“I s’pose he thinks it a favour, eh? If *she* thinks it so let her marry him. She ain’t fit for anything else now. But, Mr. Morton, you’ve taken upon you to house her and you may marry her off. I don’t know her any longer as my daughter, and if she comes into my door I’ll turn her out. Jest you advise that there honourable Major to keep out of my path—and tell them both, with my compliments, they can go to the devil. I’m off for Montreal to-morrow, and if I can find a good tidy girl, I’ll marry her and see if I can’t leave my money to an honest child. If so be I have no such, my money will go to the Catholic Church.

“What, the Roman Catholics!” exclaimed the Presbyterian in horror. “You have not turned Catholic!”

“No,” replied Mr. Spriggs with a grim smile, “but I’m turned desperate, and I’ll do the worst I can. And now see here, Mr. Morton—you’re an old friend and I don’t want to quarrel with *you*: but, that Doctor Jobson, I’m told he has taken the Major’s part. They’re all of a sort those English aristocrats. Well, just you tell him, without my compliments, I don’t wish the honour of his acquaintance, and ask him not to come nigh me if he don’t want to be insulted. Good day to you, Mr. Morton. Oh! see here! You tell the gal to send and take away her things. I don’t want a rag or a scrap of her property lying about my house, d’ye hear?”

Thus was war declared. Cornwall became a battleground of two distinct parties who might have been named the Jobson party and the Spriggs party. Business, pleasure, and religion were affected and divided by the feud. Neighbours would not know each other, friends became foes, society ran in two currents. The enmity was active, and hostilities were never suspended. Spriggs, untroubled by

conscientious scruples, was backed and counselled by Podgkiss, who was animated by the reverse of principles. All who were interested in Spriggs's business or who had come within his power, or who felt themselves to have been injured through some infelicitous word or act on the part of Doctor Jobson or his wife, or who hated people of better manners and higher pretension than themselves, went over to Mr. Spriggs. His was essentially a democratic party, though one of its leaders was Councillor Jewett, a very able and substantial man, who gave it great force and respectability. On that side too was Dr. Skirrow.

Dr. Skirrow was a hard-featured person, with a Milesian face, the original outlines of which had been sensibly enlarged and altered by much feeding and a more than fair quantum of whiskey and of beer. His coarse hair was grizzled, and his whiskers stuck like bristles from his rounded cheek. Deep were the wrinkles that sank in the fat on either side of his swollen nose. His lips were large and ill-shaped, and when they opened disclosed a slovenly set of teeth of the terrier order, fluted and broken. It was a struggle for him to keep the hard grey bristles down upon his lip and chin. His small eyes under shaggy eyebrows, furtively peered out, as if seeking a chance to search the observer, without being caught at it. Doctor Skirrow took snuff, and snuffled. A man who merely sends a pinch up his nasal orifice with a half jerk and a subdued sigh is bad enough : but the creature who begins with a snort and continues in steady and sonorous sniffs long after you had hoped the exciting dust had found its resting-place, is a disgusting bore. And indeed this was Doctor Skirrow's character. His wife has already been described by Mrs. Jobson. When Doctor Skirrow found her too acid, he mixed a prescription—curiously not alkaline—and drank it, hot. On the whole they suited each other. It is beyond conception that any other woman could have been found so well adapted to the idiosyncrasies of Doctor Skirrow, and Doctor Skirrow could hardly have found a wife more vulgar or more kind to his little weaknesses than Mrs. Skirrow.

Young Skirrow, Taddy Jobson's first enemy, was their masterpiece. He combined them with aggravations. He was cleverer than the two put together.

CHAPTER XX.

FIRST AND SECOND MORTGAGES.

DOCTOR JOBSON soon began to find out the virtue of Mr. Spriggs's enmity

One day a farmer from Dickenson's landing, who had borrowed of him a hundred and fifty dollars at ten per cent., a very moderate interest, for the current rate with Mr. Spriggs and others was eighteen to twenty, came into the Doctor's consulting-room.

"Doctor," he said, "unless you can lend me three hundred dollars to-day, I'm ruined."

"Three hundred dollars!" cried Jobson. "Why, my dear sir, I have already lent you one hundred on a second mortgage, and that was quite enough considering the value of the property. Besides I haven't got it."

"Jest so!" said the man pricking his ears at this information, and a smile stealing over his face. "That's what he said. Well the first mortgagee is going to sell me up, and the place won't fetch two hundred and fifty at an auction."

"Why you told me it was worth a thousand dollars yourself, and so did Councillor Jewett."

"Yes, but you see, Doctor Jobson, Councillor Jewett is Mr. Spriggs's law adviser."

"Mr. Spriggs!" cried the Doctor. "What has he to do with it?"

"Well, I reckon Mr. Spriggs owns the mortgage."

"But the first mortgage was in Councillor Jewett's own name."

"Yes," said the tenant winking. This wink exasperated Jobson. He detested the familiarities which these men permitted themselves. "Yes, sir, but then you see Mr.

Spriggs puts Councillor Jewett forward like to do his business for him. He's a knowing fellow is old Spriggs. No one but himself can tell where his money lies."

Doctor Jobson's brow contracted. He remembered that he had a good many hundred dollars out on second mortgages which followed after Councillor Jewett and others, and it flashed upon his mind that the holders were nearly all friends of Mr. Spriggs.

"Well, what is it you want now, Mr. O'Donnell?"

"Three hundred and sixty dollars," replied the farmer coolly.

"Yes, yes, but what for?"

"Why to pay off Spriggs. He is going to foreclose the mortgage for non-payment of interest."

"I can do nothing," said the Doctor decidedly, and even angrily.

"He! he! that's exactly what *he* said!" replied the farmer. "All right, Doctor. I must go. Good morning. I thought that mought-be you would like to save your money."

"But good gracious! Mr. O'Donnell, you are not going to repudiate your liabilities in that way. You must pay me as well as Spriggs. It would be dishonesty, sir, rank dishonesty."

"I don't know," replied the farmer shrugging his shoulders. "I can't pay if I can't: and Spriggs is a hard old file. I must go into bankruptcy. I am very sorry, Doctor. Good morning, sir."

"Stop, stop. Sit down here a few minutes. I must have time to consider what can be done."

The farmer in a sullen and exasperating way took a seat, leaning an elbow on a knee with a rough hat dangling on his big brown finger. Doctor Jobson put on his hat and walked briskly over to Mr. Latouche.

The lawyer listened. He chicked his mouth on one side and smiled. He rather seemed to take it as a good joke.

"Clever!" he said, "deuced clever. They're going to worry you, Doctor, and I tell you Spriggs and Jewett together are hard to beat."

Doctor Jobson looked—as he felt—uncomfortable, quite as much at the lawyer's coolness as at the prospect his words opened up to him.

"Really, my dear sir, it is no laughing matter," he said. "I have been years in making the little money I have, and if these people are really up to such an infernal policy as you seem to suggest, it will be very serious indeed to me.

The astute lawyer was a little touched, not by Jobson's words but by his tone and manner. The Doctor seemed so fresh and unworldly, and so really hit.

"Well, Doctor," said Latouche, "we must see what can be done. But you must tell me frankly your exact position, how many mortgages you have and where the money lies, and all your resources. I can see they will be strained—strained to the utmost, and you must make up your mind to a lot of worry. Spriggs's enmity never sleeps. But I owe Jewett for two or three dirty tricks he has played upon me, and we will see if we cannot take it out of him. I will do my best for you."

It was lucky for Doctor Jobson that the lawyer had a score against Councillor Jewett. It engaged his feelings as well as his professional pride in the struggle which was about to commence.

"Now," said Mr. Latouche, after Doctor Jobson had frankly opened to him the entire situation, "is there any one you can depend on to lend you a few thousand dollars? You see what these fellows mean to do. You have been trusting too much to the attorney on the other side, my dear sir. A great mistake to do that. 'No man can serve two masters,' you know. You are sure to be done some time or other. They evidently know more about your position than is convenient."

"What do you suppose then they mean to do?" cried the Doctor.

"Oh! that is clear enough. All these mortgages," he said, putting his finger on the list of the second liens held by Doctor Jobson, "will be foreclosed, by arrangement with the mortgagers. The lands will be thrown on the market and bought in, and when your liens are cleared off, and the men have gone through the bankruptcy court, which is easy

enough in this country, they will be given back again to the owners with another mortgage on them. Our only chance is to buy them up ourselves. We shall do the owners and the mortgagees at the same time. It will take twelve thousand dollars."

"I cannot borrow it," said the Doctor, feeling highly uncomfortable.

"Well, well, there is time enough," said Mr. Latouche good-naturedly. "I will see what can be done. Meanwhile go back and tell that thief O'Donnell, to go to the d—— and do what he likes."

Doctor Jobson, a very sedate churchman, was not in the habit of expressing himself in the manner indicated, but he informed Mr. O'Donnell in tolerably energetic phraseology that he could do nothing in the matter, and that if the farmer dared as he proposed to act like a thief things would be allowed to take their course. The farmer looked less hurt than disappointed. He was a close friend of Spriggs, and he had anticipated much more excitement on the Doctor's part than the latter was willing to show,—perhaps a scene which would minister to his employer's ill-nature. However, he was of too low an order of intellect to play his part with cleverness.

"All right, Doctor Jobson," he said with an ugly grin. "I'm afraid you'll hear of more like me before long. You won't take it so coolly next week I fancy."

"You have performed your part, sir," said Doctor Jobson with dignity. "Perhaps others can be found to do the same dirty work—but I shall not discuss such conduct with you or any one else like you. I wish you good morning, sir."

In an hour Councillor Jewett met Latouche in the street. They were on speaking terms, though far from friendly. As they nodded to each other, Latouche said :

"By-the-by, I hear you are selling up O'Donnell, for Spriggs."

"No, I am not, Councillor Latouche. It is my mortgage. I want the money myself."

Latouche nodded and looked as much as he could as if he believed it.

"It is a pity to sell him up just now," he said. "The property won't fetch the amount of the mortgage, and he's a tolerably clever farmer."

"Are you acting for Doctor Jobson?" inquired his brother lawyer looking at him keenly.

"Yes, I am."

"Ah! very well, Mr. Latouche. We know exactly where we stand. I must decline to discuss the matter with you, sir."

"As you please, sir," said Latouche bristling up. "We know where we stand, you say. Very well. Good day, sir."

Within a week four more of the Stormont farmers dropped in upon Doctor Jobson with the same story. They had received notices to pay up, which would be followed, in default, by legal action. Doctor Jobson to save his money would be obliged to find several thousand dollars. He had no friends in Canada to whom to apply in such a case, and it might have gone very hard with him, had not that lively antipathy between Councillor Jewett and Latouche come to a head over his business. The latter went into the affair with all his spirit and ability. His friends were powerful. His own mortgages were all first liens. He took a cool view of the whole position and then set to work. The first thing to do was to ascertain the number of mortgages actually registered in the town and district. Many of these were in the hands of his friends the respectable party, who sided with Doctor Jobson. The Mayor was one. Mr. Masterman, one of the richest merchants in the town, had customers all through Stormont and Glengarry. Many of these, on long-standing accounts had given him charges on their property. His great rival in the trade of the town was Mr. Fletcher, the father of the damsels who had shown such sensibility towards the Major. Mr. Fletcher had completely gone over to the enemy. He could not avoid it, being deeply engaged with Spriggs in several speculations. In the Fletcher family, by the way, late events had created an unhappy division. The two young ladies took opposite sides. Ever since the day when the elder Miss Fletcher

had had the luck of that romantic nursing of the school master, her sister had felt aggrieved. Miss Amelia had enjoyed all the honour of that occasion, and Miss Clorinda's jealousy developed itself by a strong dislike of David Roger. Roger was inevitably mixed up with Doctor Jobson's party, and that party had to endure the venom of Miss Clorinda's hatred. On the other hand, the elder Miss Fletcher felt drawn by new sympathies to the side to which her whilome patient was attached. Hence many tears within the home circle of the Fletchers. Mrs. Fletcher, a quiet, motherly, and somewhat stout body, was much put about to keep the peace: and in her efforts to do it, not seldom incurred her husband's criticism—now and then his actual displeasure. Mrs. Fletcher, in her heart, preferred Jobson to Skirrow; but by a peremptory command from the head of the house, the latter became the family physician. Thus all over Cornwall, money, which is supposed by economists always to follow the channels of interest, ran in the currents of hatred.

Several other persons were dragged into Mr. Latouche's combination. *His* notices went out, *his* threats were issued. The farmers of the district were thrown into a state of consternation. Hardly one of them that had not from fifty to three or four hundred dollars charged on his farm at anything over ten per cent., and in the legal scrimmage which had now commenced it seemed as if half the land in the district must come to the hammer. But Latouche's idea, as we have seen, was to raise enough money to buy in the farms under the first charge, arranging to reinstate the farmers under fresh mortgages. As both sides were playing the same game it became a mere question of money.

At this moment a new incident diverted the attention of all parties from this method of battle. The field and the tactics were changed.

CHAPTER XXI.

EXCURSIONS—ALARUMS.

“**D**OCTOR JOBSON!” cried Councillor Latouche, one morning, running into the Doctor’s consulting room—the Councillor, a tall, bright, quick, energetic man, always seemed to run—“there’s to be a general election, and here’s a pretty go, Spriggs is to be put up!”

“Well, my dear Latouche,” said the Doctor calmly, “what of it? Just the sort of man for your Provincial Assembly I should say.”

“‘*Your*’ Provincial Assembly, Doctor!” replied the lawyer. “Why it is yours too. You are as much interested in our good government as I am. Why do you and Mrs. Jobson always talk of this country as if you were outside of it and had no part in it? Why your children will have to live here.”

“Perhaps you are right,” said the Doctor, blushing manfully, “it is a habit we have got into, arising perhaps out of the hope we cherish of transferring ourselves some day to our old home. I confess it is very foolish. But at all events I cannot take much interest in that splashpool, *our*—if you please—Provincial Assembly.”

“Ah! steady, my boy!” replied Latouche. “Just look here. Parliament only meets about six weeks every Spring. You can easily get an assistant and spare the time.”

“Stop! stop! *Me?*” exclaimed the Doctor with conventional, if not grammatical propriety.

“*Me?*” He could hardly get his breath.

Mrs. Jobson at that moment entered the room. Latouche greeted her with an embarrassed air.

“What do you think, dear?” said Jobson—his face breaking out all over in a sunny smile. “Latouche has just proposed to me a great honour—to represent this town and district in the Provincial Assembly!”

"Well, Mr. Latouche!" said Mrs. J. with an energy and depth of sound that showed how real was her feeling. "What next? Is it not bad enough to be embroiled in a low struggle with Mr. Spriggs—without asking my husband to wade through deeper mire in order to step into such a sink of iniquity and horror as that?"

"My dear Mrs. Jobson," began the lawyer with a deprecating smile.

"No, no, Mr. Latouche, don't argue it. I know you are a clever lawyer; but this is a thing not to be thought of. It is useless to plead with me."

"Stay!" cried Latouche with an energetic and peremptory voice which struck Mrs. Jobson as a little rude.

—"What if this is the only way to save Doctor Jobson from the difficulties arising through recent proceedings?"

Both the Doctor and his wife looked at the lawyer with a little surprise in their faces.

"How do you mean?"

"Well," said Latouche, "you don't suppose this information is all over the town. I got it confidentially and no matter through whom. It is a move of the party on the other side. They had a meeting night before last at Fletcher's. Some friend of theirs had brought the news by the Toronto boat. They resolved to put Spriggs up, and are calculating on his being returned unopposed. They think that there is no other possible candidate. They are sure of their own party, and they know all the rest of us are so taken up with other things. I can't stand—the Mayor can't stand—Morton can't stand; you know he owes Fletcher and Spriggs nearly four thousand dollars—and the fact is you are the only man that can stand, and they decided there was no chance of you. Now you *must* stand just to spite them."

"I won't," said Doctor Jobson.

"He shan't," said Mrs. Jobson.

The lawyer shook his head.

"Don't be too hasty," he said quietly. "If you don't stand, Doctor Jobson, I do not see how we can carry on our fight with any chance of success. Spriggs is agent of the Bank of Montreal. He can get as much money as he

wants on his mortgages, and I am convinced if the struggle goes on, not only will there be a frightful state of things in the county, but he will beat us. Now, if you stand, all that comes to an end. He will be obliged to withdraw all his notices from the farmers in order to get their votes. You will run him very close even if you don't succeed. You force him to spend a lot of money. It will be the most expensive contest ever held in Cornwall," chuckled Mr. Latouche, "and we'll worry them, sir, we'll worry them, before we have done."

Doctor Jobson's face grew longer as he gradually took in the Mephistophelean lawyer's plan. He looked at the Councillor and then looked at Mrs. Jobson, as if appealing for help against an idea winning its way.

Mrs. Jobson evinced a greater interest in the scheme. There was a certain daring cleverness about it which attracted her. And as Jobson considered it, he bethought him of many good reasons why he should sacrifice himself for the good of the country and perhaps of his children. But he was too cautious to commit himself in a hurry, so he prayed for time to think over it.

The wily Latouche saw that his victory was practically gained. He went across to the Judge, and made it all right with him. He took the Dean into confidence, and was encouraged by that spiritual authority. And he sent for Morton, who had great influence in the county, and held a conference with him. It was resolved by these worthies that the moment Spriggs had committed himself, Jobson was to be waited on with a requisition from the most respectable part of the town, and if he agreed should be brought out.

How did Mr. Latouche get his information? The day before, when school was over, David Roger, who had resumed his old steady ways, started off to get his couple of hours of fresh air and exercise. His route this time lay by the road along the bank of the river. In a very few minutes from the school-house gate, he had left behind him houses and gardens. The flat country stretched away to his left, large fields enclosed by dingy lines of "post and rail," or by the irregular "snake" fences which seemed to wriggle across

the plain, with their crossed stakes at short but regular intervals, giving one the idea of reticulations in the lengthy skeleton body. The stubble left by the gathered harvest already began to be smothered by the growing clover. Large tracks of the brownish-green leaves of mangel-wurzel here and there caught the eye. A few clumps of trees, with long straight trunks and tufting foliage towards the top, and a barn or two, diversified the scene, but that was all, until far away the lowering woods hemmed in the landscape. Some of the fields were dotted with stumps cicatriced by fire and weather, still remaining to remind the farmer how hardly the first victory over nature had been won. But when passing by the vast works on the new locks and the workmen's huts at the mouth of the Canal, Roger descended a little on the road that led close by the bank of the Saint Lawrence, there was a marvellous change. On his right ran swiftly the wide river, a smooth moving plane. Stretching across, through vistas of islands for miles, the vast body of the stream passed on with a strange muffled noise. Up from below, as the mighty weight of water fretted across the hidden rocks, rose to the surface the rippling and bubbling currents. Circles played and eddies whirled in multitudinous variety of curves along the glistening plane. It seemed so potent that mass of waters, incomprehensibly vast yet rolling so calmly. Davy Roger loved to look at it. Far as his eye could reach it moved on majestic. Mile upon mile of living water, surging steadily and ceaselessly towards the ocean rest—a rest so brief and uncertain. Along the bank at intervals the bushes which grew luxuriantly in the virgin soil, and the trees that canopied the stream, looked down on the wrinkled surface at the shadows they threw, where in pellucid depths the perch loved to rest from tiring struggle with the stream, and the broad black bass gravely hovered near the rocks. Here and there in that vast expanse of moving brightness, lay islets green, embowered : and wherever the water was protected from movement, the graceful bending rushes grew, and among them lazily floating fed the wild duck, or now and then they rose with a chuckle and in fair order flew across the scene. Over all the great sun declining shed glow and sheen, while the sky

above, cloudless and blue, gave a fine ethereal glamour to the restlessness of the mirror on which its reflection played. The evening was warm, but Roger was lightly clad in linen coat and trousers, his collar loose, his throat open, and his eye drinking in the beauty of the noble river in its beautiful setting of rock and wood, of promontory and island, all coroneted with foliage. He wandered long, and when he turned, came slowly back, pondering sad things of which that scene reminded him. His heart was empty now and life looked desolate with its endless vista of duty and its closed-up gates of love and hope ; but he was a man and would at least face the time to come with manful resignation.

So he was thinking, when as he passed a small wood which occupied a jutting point of the river, he saw a figure, which seemed to attend his approach. He knew it at a glance. It was Miss Fletcher, who had suddenly stepped from behind a tree a few yards off the road, and made a motion for him to stop. She looked anxiously up and down the road, and then called out :

“Come here, Mr. Roger, I want to speak to you.”

Roger was a little disconcerted at this address. He did not fail in grateful feeling to his agreeable nurse, but there had been a little awkwardness about his last appearance, or rather disappearance, at Mr. Fletcher’s house, and besides he was naturally shy and afraid of women, generally believing them to be tricky and dangerous. This young lady now seemed to be anxious to draw him out of sight into the wood, and he hesitated a moment.

“Quick, Mr. Roger, or I shall run away !” cried Miss Amelia impatiently.

Though this was exactly what the schoolmaster would have given a great deal if she would do, he strode toward her upon this appeal.

“Here,” she said, “I must not be seen with you. I want to tell you something that is important to friends of yours. Let us walk out of sight.”

Roger prying into her dark eyes with his blue ones saw that there was seriousness in her meaning and no lightness in her manner, wherefore he hesitated no longer. His face even broke into a smile. Miss Amelia charmingly

responded, showing her white teeth. She had agreeable, if not pretty features, and was tall, and rather elegant, and to-day dressed with great care. The nuns at Montreal teach excellent manners, and very fair taste. She put a little gloved hand on his arm.

"You know all the trouble there is," she said, "between Mr. Spriggs and father and the rest and Dr. Jobson."

He nodded. Master Roger was not overpolished.

"Well," she said smiling "you are one of the 'enemy,' you know."

"I?"

"Yes. You helped the—the Major"—Roger's eye darkened—"and are a friend of Doctor Jobson. So of course you must expect to be hated by those that hate them."

"Why," said Roger, "I have not interfered. I have done nothing. I couldn't of course allow a man to be killed if I could prevent it."

"No matter. They *hate* you, and see here, Mr. Roger," she said eagerly, leaning towards him, "I am afraid—I—I mean there is danger,—they will try to get you removed from the school; so please be careful what you say or do, and keep your eyes wide open. You know I will tell you all I can get to hear."

Roger had been walking alongside her among the trees, his hands behind his back, his big head thrown back, his hat well on the back of it. Miss Amelia's hand was no longer on his arm. He looked at her again keenly and a flush went over his forehead. Why shouldn't he go away? what did all this interest mean? was the natural idea that flashed through his mind. She saw quickly enough all that was passing there and changed the subject.

"Then there's another thing. You must manage to tell Doctor Jobson or Mr. Latouche,—he is the quickest man they say—yesterday afternoon a man arrived in the boat—a friend of father's—from Toronto. There is to be an election very soon. In the evening father and Councillor Jewett and Spriggs were in the parlour talking for hours, and as the window was open I could hear nearly all they said. At my window—you know it—" she stopped and



"Miss Amelia put a little gloved hand on his arm."

Page 124, Book III.

glanced at her companion, over whose face came a swift flash of fun and then a cloud—"over the parlour."

"This is not right," said David Roger, simply and decidedly. He stopped and looked at her. The blood rushed to her face. "It is not right, my dear Miss Fletcher, to tell me this. You heard it by—by—"

"By listening, Mr. Roger, that's how you hear everything, isn't it? That is perfectly true, and I thought you would say something like this just to punish me for caring about any one's interests. It is always the way."

She pouted and turned aside. He was silent.

"Very well, Mr. Roger, I am sorry I stopped you—and I—I won't trouble you again."

Her handkerchief was flourished and she appeared to be about to depart.

"O stop, stop, Miss Fletcher! Really I don't know what to say. It is so very kind of you—but then it is so very wrong, not to speak of the danger, for you to act as a spy on your father for the benefit of his opponents."

"Well, Mr. Roger, you have cured me, sir!" said Miss Fletcher, drawing herself up with dignity; "and next time I choose a confidant, I will take care he is a gentleman."

Roger grew very red, and if the truth could have been told at that moment he was only wishing some man would say such a thing as that to him. From a girl it was terribly cutting, but there was no retribution possible unless he took her in his arms and kissed her, and he did not want to do that.

"Stay," said Roger, catching hold of Miss Fletcher's hand and grasping it so tight in his huge fingers that it nearly made her scream out, and yet she was delighted—"fearfully delighted," as Dryden says. "Stay. We must not part bad friends. I do not forget your kindness. Miss Fletcher—perhaps I owe my life—a worthless article enough—to you. (*A squeeze.*) It may be your kindness has made me over-frank—but I was speaking as a friend—a big brother as it were—and you must forgive me if I have said anything to hurt your feelings. Really—I would not do so—not for the world."

This was most delightful to Amelia—though in reality David had no more idea of sentiment in this gallant speech, than if he had addressed it to a marble statue or to Bathsheba.

“Oh! we shall understand each other,” cried Miss Fletcher with premature confidence. “No matter where I got the information. Please go and tell Mr. Latouche that there is to be an election and that it was arranged last night that Mr. Spriggs was to stand: and they think Doctor Jobson is the only man in the neighbourhood who could stand with any chance, but they don’t believe he will come out. There, Mr. Roger. Please say good-bye. I am going to take tea with the Smithsons a mile further on, and am very late already. Don’t tell a soul you have seen me. Good-bye!”

She squeezed his hand with all her energy, but he was thinking of something else and did not notice it. He took off his hat, and mechanically bid her good-day.

“What a dear old stupid he is!” exclaimed Miss Amelia as she slyly took advantage of a turn in the road to watch the broad form of the schoolmaster striding along. He never thought of looking back. He was pondering the news he carried, and her personality was, for the time at least, merged in the large current of thought that, like the river below him, ran and eddied in his mind.

The genius of Latouche had not yet found its limits. When the news of the impending election was generally known in Cornwall, and Mr. Spriggs’s candidature was a settled fact, Councillor Latouche quietly left town. He disappeared without giving any of the usual intimations to his friends. Mrs. Latouche professed to be ignorant of his whereabouts; his clerks were quite as unable to answer for their master. He had no cases in Brockville or Toronto, and no one was aware that he had business in Montreal. The rumours in the parlour of Mr. Spriggs’s hotel were vague and contradictory. Some said he had been seen going up to Dickenson’s landing, doubtless with the intention of crossing to the “States”; and one *canard* was that he had had a misunderstanding with his wife and run away altogether. Podgkiss had already passed the

joke that it was like "Junius deserting Dido." Podgkiss was once more secure in his classics, since Roger now never entered the door of the Cornwall Arms.

Neither Councillor Jewett nor Mr. Spriggs believed any of the reports that were current about Mr. Latouche. They had too high an opinion of him to think that he would make a fool of himself in any way, and they expressed to each other the uncomfortable feeling that "Latouche was up to some tricks."

They were not wrong.

One morning, a week after the lawyer had been missed, he appeared in his spring buggy with a brisk pair of horses, fairly spattered with mud, driving fast down Pitt Street. There was a significant smile on his keen face. By his side there sat a sedate-looking man, with rough features, a long under-jaw and a pair of grey eyes, which seemed to look well about them, and take stock of things as he went along. They drove, we say, down Pitt Street, turned at the foot, into Water Street, passed the Court-house, and so on to Councillor Latouche's residence.

Spriggs, standing in his doorway, noted the wagon and its inmates, and for some reason or other, which at first he could not explain to himself, he experienced an unpleasant sensation. His sharp eye looked hard at the stranger and then his face assumed a puzzled expression.

"I've seen that man before, somewhere," he said to himself, "I wonder who he is?"

Suddenly light flashed into his features; he slapped his forehead with his hand and sticking his thumbs into the arm-holes of his waistcoat, darted across the street to Councillor Jewett's office.

"Sold again!" he cried. "Latouche is back, and Macrea of Toronto is with him."

Jewett knew in a moment what that meant.

An hour later Latouche entered Doctor Jobson's room. He was cordially greeted and his manner indicated that he felt pleased with himself.

"It is all right Doctor, I thought I could do them."

Doctor Jobson looked up inquiringly.

"Where have you been?" he said.

"To Toronto. I have secured the Agency of the Bank of Upper Canada in this district, and, my dear sir, we can have all the money we want."

The Doctor breathed a great sigh of relief. The sharp lawyer then knew how heavily this matter had lain on his friend's mind. He felt it more thoroughly when Jobson left the room and returned with Marian, who in warm and graceful terms congratulated the lawyer on his success.

"The manager has come down with me to make all the arrangements," he said, highly gratified. "And now Jobson, d— it, we will go in and win the election. Forgive me for swearing, my dear madam, but really how could one do justice to one's feelings in any other way?"

"I forgive you this once with great difficulty, sir! How much will the election cost, Mr. Latouche?"

"Oh! it won't cost your husband more than three thousand dollars. I will undertake to get the rest subscribed."

"O my poor boys! They will never get to Cambridge!" cried the lady.

"No: and a good thing for them, my dear madam," replied Latouche. "Bring a man up *for* Canada *in* Canada. I never saw an English University fellow worth his salt out here, and for my part I really never could make out how he could be at home. Scotch University men get on very well, and so do some of our men, but your Oxford and Cambridge men are the biggest noodles turned out under God's heaven. What a fool I should have been if I had been educated at Cambridge."

"Latouche is clever," said Mrs. Jobson, when he had gone away, "but he is very prejudiced and very narrow-minded."

Doctor Jobson laughed.

"The truth is," said he, "that Latouche is both right and wrong."

CHAPTER XXII.

MASTER SKIRROW.

IN the midst of the excitement which now shook the town to its foundations, matters were not improved by the sudden and unpleasant elevation to a more than ordinary place in popular interest of so insignificant a personage as Master Tom Skirrow. This young gentleman, with his low forehead, broad face, flat nose, and thick lips, an ugly likeness of his father, was not without talent of a certain order. Having to live at home between two millstones as it were, and sometimes hard put to it to save himself from being ground to powder, Master Tom from a very early age had developed a talent for intrigue. He played off one respected parent against another in a manner worthy of a diplomatist and with as little regard to the principles of truth and honour. With Master Skirrow success was a prime consideration, whether it was in lollipops or learning; and, on the whole, it was his nature to prefer success gained by clever fraud to success coming of honest work. There is something diabolic about such natures no doubt, and their existence seems incidentally to corroborate the personality of the Devil. It may fairly be argued that there must be somewhere an original old pattern of all these actual and potential diplomatists; and who can doubt that the hero of *Paradise Lost* is the man, or the Spirit, or the being that invented diplomacy? Otherwise how can you account for Talleyrand and Ignatieff? Young Skirrow in another sphere, with his very strong quick mind and total deficiency of conscience, would perhaps have risen to be a Minister or a Chancellor, but within the circumscribed limits of Cornwall society his forces were fortunately for mankind somewhat paralysed and restrained.

Doctor and Mrs. Skirrow were in the habit of talking very freely before this young Mephistopheles, on every topic of the day, good, bad or indifferent. Before him the Doctor unadvisedly discussed his cases, emptied as it were his budget. Hence at a very early age Master Skirrow drank in knowledge not of an elevating or improving kind. Things, thoughts and ideas of which most children are happily ignorant, were to him too familiar ; and he was already a shrewd judge in popular vices when the boys around him had never heard of them. Master Skirrow however showed his ability in its strongest measure when he kept these ideas to himself. He did not attempt to share with his companions the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It lent him additional strength to feel that he only of them all could understand and appreciate the flavour of the scandals which stirred the blood of Cornwall society. Tom Skirrow was the very reverse of Taddy. He was close, furtive, not talkative, not merry, and above all cowardly ; while Taddy, though in fact much abler than Skirrow, was open and bold to folly, generous and sympathetic, and always chattering and laughing.

Of all the boys in the school Skirrow was the first to know what had happened in Cornwall when the Major went away and Spriggs and Doctor Jobson became enemies. Tom Skirrow heard it all talked over in his father's dingy parlour, and over and over again in all its real and unreal phases. He had been down sily to Spriggs's bar, and producing a stolen sixpence, had drunk a nip of whisky and smoked a twopenny cigar among the crowd, hardly noticed in the excitement or when noticed only laughed at. He had a clever way of winking at any one who accosted him, and common folk knowing him very well, rather too good-naturedly passed him by as a "rare little devil," a character given in fun and borne in earnest. Skirrow's brain was fired by all he heard, he resolved to throw himself into the great strife which was impending. He would take the side of Spriggs and organise a Spriggs party in the school. It lent additional flavour to this idea over which he rolled the big tongue in his frog-like mouth, that he

knew the master to be a friend of Jobson's, and that therefore there was some real danger in the operation which he, the new tribune, pondered

Skirrow proceeded about his business with praiseworthy promptness. He pursued a policy not so very different from that of a celebrated Premier in "educating his party." He took young Fletcher, and young Maguire—the Irish boy whose nose Taddy had so mercilessly knuckled, and made them his lieutenants. He stole apples and gave them away, and begged pennies and expended them on popped corn and toffy, with which he secured junior spirits. Taddy, who was of much quicker mind than Skirrow, if not so cunning, soon found out what was on the carpet. Maguire cut him. Fletcher refused to play "shinny" one day in Taddy's team. Other boys with whom he had been on familiar terms avoided him, or laughed in his face. And last of all, in the Latin class where Taddy had caught up with Master Skirrow and was his strongest rival, he found out that there was a conspiracy to keep Skirrow at the top of the class, by an arranged system of "tellings." So cleverly had Skirrow arranged this plan that David Roger, though shrewd enough, did not notice it. Taddy could have set the matter right in five minutes. David Roger had been engaged to bring him on three nights a week in Euclid, Mrs. Jobson coming in to learn it too, and encourage her boy. Nothing would have been easier than to give Roger a hint some night and the next day would have witnessed Skirrow's confusion. But Taddy was too proud to take this advantage. His nature revolted from back-stair influences. Young as he was, that proud nature and clear daring look of his mother's had penetrated him, and her constant ringing epigrams on virtue and generosity and true nobility and high breeding and all that sort of thing stirred in the boy feelings to which his gentler brothers and sisters were strangers.

However, Taddy did not fail of friends. Willy Masterman, the biggest and strongest boy in the school, was on his side, so was his brother, and a number of others who had suffered from Skirrow's bullying ways. Indeed, the school was very fairly divided into the Jobsonites and Skirrowites, these

representing the larger forces which were drawn up in battle array in the outer society. Within the school this produced the usual humorous effects. Maguire and Masterman sat at adjacent desks and never spoke. If one wanted something which the other had, or was directed by Roger to hand a book to the other, they managed it by signs, or the one dropped the book and left the other to pick it up. It is a marvel how long such a feud may go on in a school and a master never observe it. Roger deep in other thoughts and eager only to instil sound knowledge and good principles into the boys, had not the least idea of it. Matters were seething, active gossip and bad feeling helping them on, when the announcement was made that there was to be an election and that Mr. Spriggs was a candidate. The walls were posted with his address. The Skirrowites were jubilant. They affected colours, and Roger's eye one day running over the school observed that a number of the lads wore little pieces of yellow ribbon in their button-holes, like so many members of a new Legion of Honour.

"What is this?" he said smiling. "What are you wearing these ribbons for? Skirrow, what's up?"

"Nothing, sir," replied Master Skirrow.

"Which is a lie, Master Skirrow, for which you will go down to the bottom of the class. Maguire, you are wearing a ribbon, what does it mean?"

"Oh! only fun, sir," replied Maguire, his little Irish face and twinkling eyes giving zest to the statement.

"Yes, but it means something—come away, my lad, out with it." The school was listening breathlessly for Maguire's answer, which halted tremendously, when a little voice from the back benches, piped up shrilly—

"Please, sir, I know—it's the election, and them is Mr. Spriggs's colours."

Little Troutbeck, only nine years old, had not yet learned the value of either grammar or silence. Skirrow cast a look at him from under his big brow, which Taddy quick as lightning did not fail to note.

"Well boys," said Roger good-naturedly, "it is all very well to take sides in the election—but I can't have politics introduced in school hours. We know nothing of that

here. Take them all off, and don't let me see a colour inside the school or about the school-house again. I have nothing to do with your home-play."

The ribbons vanished in a twinkling, the Skirrowites abashed, the Jobsonites not hiding their amusement.

Taddy was writing his copy in the last hour of the afternoon, when a bit of paper was slipped into his hand by a friend on his left. It was from Masterman, written in a fair round hand and contained these words :

"Look out for Jonny Troutbeck after hours. The Skirrowites are going to mob him."

Taddy felt that a great crisis was coming. He coloured and nodded across to his friend, and sundry notes were quickly passed about. His copy was one of the worst he had ever written, and Roger said so, out loud, with other disparaging remarks.

No sooner was the school over, than it became evident that important events were on the carpet. The Skirrowites rushed out, and down the street to Fletcher's corner, where a *rendezvous* had been arranged. Every boy took out the hidden ribbon and fastened it on again. Shrill were the voices and active the tongues of the party. Skirrow took the lead in preparing for contingencies. The boys filled their pockets with stones. Skirrow produced from his pocket a small brass cannon which he declared to be loaded. There was a cheer.

Taddy and Masterman remained behind in the school-yard and reviewed their forces. They resolved to see young Troutbeck safely home. A scout was sent down the street to reconnoitre the enemy, and soon came back in a hurry, chased almost to the gate by Cossacks of the Skirrow army with stones. Young Jobson by sheer force of intellect was looked to as one of the leaders, though he was not the oldest or the biggest. He felt very shy about provoking a battle in the street, and perhaps drawing Roger's attention to it. So he proposed that they should all walk off in the opposite direction from the Skirrowites, across the open fields, and towards the canal locks, where as he reminded the party if they were attacked there was less likelihood of interference, and stones were plentiful.

At the moment when this was decided on, Roger appeared, locking the school-house door. In an instant the whole troop rushed out of the gate, and made for the fields. The Skirrowites, observing their tactics, were just about to follow in pursuit, when Roger emerged from the gate. The word was given to go round by another street, and the schoolmaster, making for the Post-office, passed on unconscious of the passions which were surging around him.

Taddy and his friends dashed on. There was an old shanty haliway across the fields, flanked by two huge stumps, and here the leaders resolved to await the enemy, the younger boys looking very pale and frightened and the elder marching about with the air of heroes. The enemy was soon discerned approaching in loose order and somewhat out of breath.

Skirrow saw that the position was well chosen. There was no approaching the main body without capturing one of the flanking stumps, and these were held by the most formidable forces, Masterman in command of the one and Taddy Jobson of the other. However, his attack was directed less by strategy than by hate. He bore down at the head of his forces on Jobson's stump. Sharp and swift rang the stones as the enemy came up, one little fellow close to Taddy getting one in his jaw, which made the blood spurt, but bravely returning good for evil in hard stone. The half-dozen boys at the outwork were overpowered, and before Taddy could retreat he was surrounded. His friends, afraid to throw their missiles, now joined forces, and led by Masterman charged down on the *mêlée* for hand to hand conflict.

More than one boy had gone down under Skirrow's comparatively big fist, loaded with a pebble, when he and Jobson came into collision. Running at Taddy, Master Tom swung his arm heavy with the stone and hit his antagonist under the ear a blow which toppled him over. There was a rush from the relieving column. Masterman was on the scene, and just in time to save Jobson from very cowardly treatment. He knocked down Master Skirrow with his own hand, and then picked up Taddy,

who clenching his fists waited for his antagonist. His blood was well up, and he remembered the Major's advice. With a delicacy of feeling which all Englishmen will appreciate, Masterman kept back the crowd from the two combatants.

Skirrow had no sooner got his feet than with a furious face he rushed upon Taddy. Our hero, his eye quick and clear, his fist doubled up ready, watched every movement of his opponent. As Skirrow came roughly up, indifferent to style or art, Taddy, watching his opportunity delivered a quick blow upward with his sharp fist, right under the nose of the foe; and before he could recover, a second blow ringing on his mouth sent him to earth.

"Hurrah! Jobson, that's it! give it to him!" cried Masterman.

Skirrow rose again in fury, and once more rushed upon Taddy, hitting out wildly with both fists; but this round Taddy's scientific hit was a bad one in the eye, and a second in the nose, as he dodged Skirrow's inartistic round-handers. Both were in earnest and put forth all their strength and passion. It was a terrible fight. All the boys looked on aghast. Twice Taddy caught it—pretty smartly—but Master Skirrow had already measured his length five or six times when suddenly he stopped—took something from his pocket—lit a match and touched it to the object he held in his hand. A loud report, followed by a shriek and the falling of a lad who stood just behind Taddy, sent a shiver of fear through the crowd, and at this moment Roger, who had posted his letter and was on his way for a walk, strode upon the scene.

Masterman's younger brother lay on the ground howling with such a healthy vigour, that no one could have expected his immediate dissolution. Skirrow stood scowling at Taddy. He and Masterman senior were in the act of precipitating themselves on the malefactor. But Roger was before them. He had seen the shot, he caught up Master Skirrow between his finger and thumb by the nape of the neck, inflicting a pressure which made him shriek with pain and terror. Holding him thus, he examined the wounded lad. There was not much the matter. A small

pellet had just grazed his neck, inflicting only a flesh wound, which bled freely.

Into town, followed by the whole school, walked David Roger, leading Master Skirrow, till he reached the small office devoted to the police, where he gave him into custody. Master Skirrow had succeeded in making himself famous. The whole of Cornwall could be roused in twenty minutes, and in half an hour it was known at every hearth that Tom Skirrow was in the hands of the police, charged with shooting at and wounding young Masterman, and that Doctor Skirrow was at the Mayor's behaving like a madman.

Bad as Skirrow was all the boys were sorry for him, and Taddy on the way had even ventured to approach his friend the schoolmaster and beg him to let the culprit off and say nothing about it. Roger's design, however, was to give the young miscreant a fright—in which for the time he thoroughly succeeded; but when, after considerable difficulty, after Mrs. Skirrow had nearly fought the two policemen and been carried home in a fainting condition, and Doctor Skirrow completely unnerved had even been reduced to the necessity of calling in Jobson to attend his wife, Mr. Masterman generously intervened on behalf of the prisoner, and by a little winking of justice he was set free. What happened to Master Tom on his restoration to the bosom of his affectionate family was never disclosed, though divers howls were heard to proceed from Doctor Skirrow's house, and his son did not appear in public for some days. Before he did, the trustees of the school had met and dismissed him, and finding that he was an object of general execration, the Doctor sent him to board with some poor relatives in Montreal, there to attend the High School. On the boy's mind the trouble, the mortification, the sorrow he had given to his friends, stood for little beside the notoriety he acquired by this incident, and his inner consciousness that there was no other youth in Cornwall who could have imagined, or dared to execute, the wickedness of which he had been guilty, or to brave its consequences with so philosophic a complacency. The cool conceit of badness in natures so immature is as puzzling a problem to a student of

human nature as baffling to the ingenuity or the affection of those whose duty it is to deal with it.

Relieved of this little disturbing element in the sea of Cornwall life, the ordinary cyclones of human passion resumed their courses on this little Mediterranean sea.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A PROVINCIAL ELECTION.

BRITONS, like the ancient Romans, are famous, the world over, for carrying with them not only their arms, their baggage, their dress, their language, their customs and their manners (or the want of them), but their social and political institutions. Their beer and whiskey and religion march *pari passu* with their conquests and accompany their free ideas and popular government. As soon as possible amid Arctic snows or tropic heats, when the bar and the church have been installed in temporary shanties, and the gentleman in his shirt sleeves and the gentleman in a surplice have initiated their friendly opposition, the inevitable parochial talking-shop is set agoing. A vestry, a town Council, a Mayor and Corporation, an assembly, involving popular elections, canvassing, public speaking, *meetings* (a word now adopted into some European languages as expressive of something to which only a British trade-mark applies), treating, bribery, undue influence and all the other incidents of our blessed and glorious British Constitution, exist almost wherever the bright cross flaunts in the breeze. At Demerara and Mauritius, Singapore and New Zealand, Canada and South Africa, this noble heritage of British palaver finds home and development. One might almost say that there are few things in which the infant states that have sprung from the matronly nation, have so perfectly copied the habits and customs of their dear old country, as in the conduct of their elections, and their magnificent indifference to the fitness of things in the selection of men to administer their affairs. Local Government means with our children nations the force of local prejudice just as it does at home, and the political qualities of candidates are secondary in the one sphere as in the other to personal considerations

In the County of Stormont and town of Cornwall, those wily agents, Messrs. Jewett and Latouche showed a remarkable familiarity with ancient and time-honoured observances in England ; and all the machinery of influence, of intrigue, of social and financial interest, of corruption, was set in full motion.

Doctor Jobson found it to be fearful work. To him public speaking was an unknown art. It is an art the age now unreasonably demands of nearly all men without regard to fitness or training. Everything is now reduced to the Grand Palaver. And the Age called on Doctor Jobson and found him certainly at the time of the call sadly wanting. However he strung himself to the task and managed to acquit himself to the satisfaction even of the cynical Latouche. He was obliged to get an assistant up from Montreal and abandon to him all except his most critical cases. Meetings in Roxborough, meetings in Osnabruck, meetings in Finch ; active canvassing of farmers living on corduroy roads where the round logs floated and floundered in black stodgy mud, and up by-roads, which were mere bogs varied only by stagnant pools. Perhaps after driving five miles in a shaky buggy, and being splashed all over with inky fluid, he would find the constituent had gone "back" in his location "a few fields," and would be obliged to trudge off through a strange mixture of rough cultivation and rougher wilderness in search of a man whose vote was already promised to the indefatigable Spriggs. Here and there were to be found shantie inns of unpainted pine, in whose rude bars would congregate a dozen neighbours to hear the candidate express his views on Legislative Union between Upper and Lower Canada or dilate upon the Catholic question—ever a burning topic in a country where religious jealousies are intensified by differences of race, and French and English ideas come into strong and active collision. How such a strange medley of races and religions should so long have managed to show a semblance of order is easier perhaps to explain than to answer the far more serious question, how long is it likely to go on ?

In these bar-rooms, surrounded by tatterdemalion farmers and tavern loungers, smoking and tossing down glasses of

raw whiskey provided at his expense, the Doctor found himself, not seldom to his amazement, trying to expand political ideas. With every one he was expected to drink, whiskey being the *Open Sesame* to every mind, as well as the capacity of consuming it a test of his fitness for the post of a Canadian politician. Latouche—a seasoned cask—accompanied his friend endeavouring to keep up his spirits in every sense, and to coach him in the local customs and ideas; cheering him with lively anecdotes as their bones rattled over the round logs, or when they lay down, but not to sleep, in couches peopled with myriads of the active insects which the pine wood breeds in such profusion, or sat down before dishes that might have tested the stomach of an Esquimaux or even of an ostrich. A hundred times the unhappy Doctor was on the point of throwing up the sponge, but Latouche reminded him of the interests at stake and in view of these he struggled on to glory.

To Mr. Spriggs on the other hand all this was life. He did the work with a terrible energy, rattling, driving, plodding, drinking, digesting, and all with the air of one who found in it a diabolic pleasure. Latouche allowed his candidate to see as little as possible of the dirty work—the pressure on poor debtors, the loans to voters, the treating and brow-beating—all this was kept as much as possible out of Doctor Jobson's way. Mr. Spriggs on the contrary preferred to see and do that sort of work himself. He was too suspicious to allow others to spend his money for him, or drive hard bargains for support. Aided by Podgkiss, he watched and followed Jobson everywhere. Their light buggy, mud-bespattered, crank and creaking, turned up like an apparition, scudded across the country, rattled and splattered through the woods, up the farm sidings, into the villages, a very phantom curricule, a Devil's wain. At length the doctor seemed to see it at every turn, and it darted through his dreams.

Fortunately there is an end even to a County canvass in the backwoods, and the day at length arrived when the rivals were to meet on the hustings. Each party had done its best and its worst. Bad whiskey and dirty Provincial bank-notes had circulated with delirious freedom, and ex-

citement had risen to boiling point. It was felt that there was very little to spare on either side, and the issue lay practically in the hands of a few independent farmers who had as yet refused to commit themselves.

The crowd that gathered at the rude hustings on nomination-day was one well worth a study. If there were men whose dress and demeanour proved them to be well-to-do, hopeful and satisfied, there were many who bore in their faces, their dress, their manner, the signs of disappointment and incapacity. A motley crowd of the free-and-independent, who had driven up in every conceivable style of vehicle, from the spring-wagon to the "buck-board," a machine consisting of four large light wheels with a pair of thin spring-boards between, about twelve feet long, in the middle of which was placed a seat, in which the tenant jumped up and down at every motion as if on an uneasy sea; men in straw hats, in Scotch caps, in beavers, in fur skins, even under the hot sun, in wideawakes, and "*tuques*," and with and among them their labourers, Irish, French, Scotch, English, even a German or two or a Swede; while here and there in picturesque dirt and dishevelment curious Indians mingled in the crowd to watch this strange pow-wow of the White-man, who as an evidence of superior civilisation had substituted this strange undignified ceremony, for the decorous assemblies of the race he had supplanted.

There on the crowded platform were gathered the dignitaries of the county, the judge, the Sheriff, the Mayor of Cornwall, and the Candidates with their friends occupying opposite sides, Dr. Jobson looking very nervous and dignified and Mr. Spriggs looking very confident and rather drunk. There also were David Roger, and Taddy standing at his side, amused and astonished at the scene before him.

When the writ had been read and the Sheriff had announced that the time for proposing candidates had arrived, Councillor Jewett himself proposed Mr. Joram Spriggs, in a vigorous speech, which was listened to by both sides with great attention. The Councillor was clever, and well up in the points which would take with his audience, while his portrait of Mr. Spriggs was a sublime piece of

combined effrontery and ingenuity. The pleader managed dexterously to introduce a reference to his friend's sorrow, and darkly hinted at the relations between the "dastardly" cause of it and the candidate on the other side.

"Gentlemen," said Councillor Jewett, leaning on the pine rail which penned him in, and drooping his head with a deeply impressive look of melancholy in his face, "Gentlemen, there are circumstances in this election—circumstances to which I allude with pain and sorrow—circumstances to which I can hardly refer without exhibiting an emotion that may seem to be weak and feminine, but which must kindle a spark of feeling in the most manly breasts before me, even in the bosoms of those who are now endeavouring to exclude my honoured friend from one of the highest and dearest ambitions of his life—which must, gentlemen, even if he should succeed—as I am sure he *must* succeed in his noble aspirations to serve his country and to confer blessings on unborn millions at this great crisis of provincial affairs—circumstances, gentlemen, which cast a shadow over his prospective triumph, and to which I feel certain I cannot allude in the presence of those who have initiated this mean, this cowardly, this disreputable opposition to my honoured friend's return, without calling a blush of shame to their cheeks—as they will I am sure when I now unexpectedly and regretfully introduce them, awaken the most painful feelings in the breast of my honoured friend."

Here he turned towards Spriggs, who held a handkerchief to his eyes—

"Yes, yes, gentlemen, I see it is too much even for that strong and manly heart, to bear an allusion however delicate to an event which has cast a gloom over a once happy home, and for ever quenched the brightest hopes of a father's heart."

Spriggs sobbed audibly—a deathly silence reigned in the crowd—Podgkiss was mopping his eyes with a dirty red cotton handkerchief, and every variety of article applicable to the purpose was employed by the members of the Committee, in a perfect blast of blowing noses.

"Ay! who can tell the sorrow, the agony, the humiliation of a home where hope was bright, and the ivy affection of a

father's heart twined strong and green round the fair, the holy and the pure? Gentlemen," continued Mr. Jewett, his feelings carrying him away and getting the better of his rhetoric, "in that blighted home the fires of affection have gone out, and ashes are strewn over the soil that once bloomed bright with flowers of hope and of joy. Gentlemen," he cried in a fine wrath, suddenly turning round and looking Doctor Jobson straight in the face, "I am astonished—I say I am surprised—I say that I cannot conceal my wonder, if not my indignation, that any one who had any share in bringing this sorrow on my honoured friend, should have *dared*—ay I say *dared*—to face a meeting of his impartial countrymen in opposition to the man who has been so vilely wronged, so wantonly and remorselessly stricken!"

Deep murmurs arose in the crowd, and Latouche saw with alarm that Jewett's eloquence was making a dangerous impression, when suddenly as the orator paused to wipe his brow, Master Taddy, who had listened intently and with deep anger at this attack on his father, suddenly called out in a clear, shrill voice that thrilled the silent crowd:

"Hit him, papa—straight out from the shoulder!"

A roar of laughter from all sides, which was echoed and re-echoed, at this timely interposition, suddenly scattered the influence of the Councillor's laboured pathetics to the winds. He looked wrathfully at the young culprit, whose face had grown red as fire, while Doctor Jobson and Latouche, stuffing their handkerchiefs into their mouths, vainly strove to conceal their amusement. David Roger fairly roared with laughter, and Councillor Jewett, who had fallen on the unlucky subject towards his peroration, found it impossible to revive again the interest so lightly broken. However, for the purpose and the people he had made a very effective speech, when he retired amid the cheers of his friends.

In his place, as seconder of Mr. Spriggs, now appeared the gaunt form, yellow complexion and greenish eyes of Mr. Podgkiss. Mr. Podgkiss's appearance indicated that he was affected by some influence not altogether natural. He held on to the balustrade with an earnest grip, as his body swayed to and fro and his head dropped from side to side

while he surveyed the cheering audience with a ghastly smile. A member of the Committee had the presence of mind to remove from the back of Mr. Podgkiss's head the tall rough beaver hat which hung there by a precarious tenure. On feeling the air circulating freely round his thin hair he managed to straighten himself up and cry out with a grimace :

“Gen’lemen !”

The truth was that Mr. Podgkiss had committed the not uncommon mistake of preparing himself too well. Not only had he framed an elaborate speech, which he had sought to commit to memory, but at the last moment, feeling that through the exciting circumstances of the day and his too numerous acceptances of courteous invitations to “smile,” his memory and his wits were failing, had rushed off the platform and taken an extra dose of that stimulant of which he already carried too much about him. Therefore at that sublime moment of oratorical agony, the *exordium*, Mr. Podgkiss found himself facing his audience while he rummaged his disordered head in vain for the clue to his elaborately prepared argument. The expression on his face, something between a smile and a pang, caused some amusement, but he once more brought his body up straight and shouted,

“Gen’lemen ! Electurs of Cornwall and Stormont—I second the nomination of Councillor Jewett—the noble Ciceroni of our district, who has recalled to our minds the ancient orators of Attic Greece and Imperious Rome ; yes—Gen’lemen, I venture to repeat, he is the Damocles and the Ciceroni of this county. (*Great cheering.*) Gen’lemen, I second this moshun with great pleasure—I have known Mister Spriggs for many years—we have been like brothers,—like Osiris and Pythias, and Dagon and Pylades, in our friendship and esteem one for another. (*Hooray ! “Go it old man.”*) Gen’lemen—I reckon you don’t want no interduction, we all know our friend”—here Mr. Podgkiss trying to turn round to throw a glance of affection towards the Candidate, let go of one hand and spun round till his back was brought up by the balustrade. He was however quickly turned again on the pivot of his

heels by a thoughtful friend, and grasping the bar with greater tenacity proceeded. "Gen'lemen, I say gen'lemen—hic—here is our true Brutus! *Our Brutus!* When I look at him I cry *et too Brootey!* which means according to the dickshunnery *And thou my Brutus.* (*Loud cheers.*) Yes let us hail him as the deliverer of his country—the saviour of Rome—no I mean Greece—the deliverer of Greece—(*laughter*)—eh?—hic—no—yes—I mean of Stormont from the usurper's sway. Gen'lemen, wot does my friend come forward as? A Eutropius or a Praxiteles or a Solomon or a Soractes? No—nor a—a Nebulus—a—a—Nebucuss—a Nebu—Nabu—a Nab—del—kadar?—hic—no!—but as a plain citizen of Cornwall to invite your sufferages—your confidence—your votes. Gen'lemen—hic—allow me say he's an honest man. (*Cheering.*) Mr. Burke gen'lemen, the Scotch poet, says—he says—hic—"an honest man's the noblest work of God." (*Cheers.*) Here he is—hic—my friend and yours, Joram Spriggs." Mr. Podgkiss executed a second pirouette of a dangerous character, for the *demi volte* nearly carried him over the bar.

"Gen'lemen—I say he is a citizen—a true *civis Romanus sum* if you know what that means—hic. ("*No No!*" "*Explain.*") Well it means—hic—it means—of course it means *civis Romanus sum.* (*Laughter.*) Now gen'lemen, there are two rich—rich—rich men in the field, as old Shakespeare said I b'lieve. (*Loud cheers.*) One is a mere furriner that has come among us a few years since and now he asks us to return him to Parliament! Gen'lemen, in Rome—hic—in old anshun Rome, gen'lemen—not Popish Rome—they was very pertikler about strangers and furriners in a strange land, for you may not all be aware—hic—if you have not read Roman history—that they passed a law—a law called *legs paper de periwinkles*—(*Roars of laughter*)—a law to expel strangers and pilgrims. They was all expelled from Rome—kicked out gen'lemen *arises et focuses.* (*Great cheering and laughter.*) Mister—Doctor Jobson—is a stranger—and a pilgrim. Gen'lemen he is as cunning as Ulysses. Ulysses was the slyest old fox of antiquity. He carried away the pall—pall *palladium.* Beware of Jobson! he wants to carry away the pall—

palladium of your liberties—the honour of your representation in the *witty—naggy—mot* of Upper Canada. (*Hooray!*) Hem! Hem! hic! Gen’lemen, I say here is Brutus,” pointing with a drunken smile towards Mr. Spriggs—“Here is the real Tribune of the People! Gen’lemen, gen’lemen, consider what is at stake. Your lives—your wives—hic—your liberties—your children—your household gods—your *liars and penayts*. (*Hooray!*) Gen’lemen, the poet says—“who would be free themselves must strike the blow”—(*great cheering*)—hic—then vote for Spriggs and freedom against Jobson and tyranny—In the words of Scripture, I say ‘in the name of the profit Spriggs’!”

Amidst tumultuous cheers and laughter, Podgkiss reeled back into the arms of his friends, who received him with no complimentary epithets. Spriggs’s sharp eyes blazed at him savagely, and quite as angrily at Jewett who had hoped to make a popular hit by putting the shoemaker forward, and was now biting his lips at his own folly. Latouche’s face was charming as he rose to nominate Doctor Jobson. He began by ironically professing the sense of diffidence with which he ventured to follow the eloquent and lively speech of his learned friend, and the classic and elegant oration to which they had just listened, and then brushing away by a few sympathetic and well-chosen words, Jewett’s reference to Spriggs’s sorrow, he brought Doctor Jobson before them as a man who, educated, capable, intelligent, and wealthy, was willing to drag himself from the seductions of home and of science, to serve the country of his adoption in a great emergency.

When Morton followed and recommended in quiet simple strains, the worthy Doctor to his fellow-countrymen as a man of “honour and honesty”—there was a general feeling that Mr. Spriggs would have to put his best foot forward, in order to carry the meeting with him; but though the landlord was not without a certain rude power in addressing such assemblies, Mr. Podgkiss’s speech proved too heavy a weight for him to throw off, and his address was listened to without enthusiasm.

Doctor Jobson had been so well served by his friends that he was encouraged, and his conscious lack of oratorical

power was not so evident to the multitude. His fine presence, his clear manly voice, his cultivated tones and quiet words produced a great effect, and it was no wonder to those present who were familiar with the temper of popular meetings, that the end of his address was received with a storm of applause. Many of those who had heard him abused by Spriggs and Podgkiss and others as a conceited fool were indignant at the fraud that had been practised upon them. The Sheriff declared the show of hands to be in the Doctor's favour. Councillor Jewett and Spriggs, however, were not alarmed at this. They had made their calculations, told up their men and felt perfectly secure of a majority, if not a large one. But Latouche's agents were already at work. He had kept quiet till the last moment. He knew every debt owed to Spriggs's party in all the four townships. It was not a very dangerous game to offer to find the money to pay off these debts, and to afford a little more accommodation, provided the votes were given on the right side. Twenty woodmen in Roxborough received an order for work on the Ottawa which took them into the back country before the polling-day, and at the poll Doctor Jobson led with a majority of fifteen.

One result of the nomination day was a deadly and irreconcilable breach in the friendship between Mr. Spriggs and Mr. Podgkiss. Spriggs could overlook many things, but a man who made a fool of him he could never forgive. Poor Mr. Podgkiss was therefore denied the Cornwall arms, cast out from his party, and as his essential attractions and value were not recognised by the other side, he was driven into an isolated position, which became so irksome to him, that he gathered together his money and his favourite *lares and penates* and shaking the dust off his feet returned to astonish his native New England, with his Cyclopædia, his Bible and his Lemprière's Dictionary.

CHAPTER XXIV

DAVID ROGER.

UP to this point only one side of the character of our hero's teacher, Mr. David Roger, has been seen by the reader. That he was large, genial, warm-hearted, impetuous, gentle with strength, a good instructor, and a man of some culture may have appeared from the glimpses given of him. But there was another side. Roger was a reader and thinker of no inconsiderable power, and, from his nature, of an independent cast. The schoolmaster's early youth had been spent in the back-parlour of the shop of a grocer of some means in Newcastle-on-Tyne, who had gone thither from Berwickshire. The grocer was a Dissenter. Dissent seems naturally to mix itself up with retail tea and coffee and butter and cheese ; it is rather strong in hosiery, and not weak in boots and shoes, while it flourishes indifferently with butchery ; but divides the Establishment with bakers and drapers. He was a deacon in a Congregational chapel. In defiance of St. James, his pew, far up near the pulpit, was lined and carpeted, by which while the casual public were made to know of his importance in that religious body, the poorer brethren had a hint to keep their distance. Not that old Mr. Roger, with his fat well-to-do body and face, tinted with some of the port that lay in his cellar, his head well up in a white collar swathed in a vast white necktie, his strong brow well garnished with grizzled curling hair, was a Pharisee—quite. He confessed himself a sinner, which the Pharisee by the way did not. If now and then in solemn periods there came into his thoughts memories of mixed pepper and chalky flour, and ground rice improved by plaster of Paris, and adulterated teas and sugars, Mr. Roger groaned like the Publican and borrowed his

words. This fine mixture so to speak of the Pharisee and the Publican is not uncommon. Since the early days of Christianity, by an improvement in what one might call the Christian adulteration business, it has been found that the two characters can be got to mingle. Old Roger was a true Pharisee-publican mixture. The wife, a fine-looking matron, whom he had married out of Lord Barrowby's hall, was a cleverer person than Mr. Roger and a sincerer. Tall, well-made and active, with a fine colour in her smooth cheeks, and a ripe ruddiness in her lips, Mrs. Roger was highly esteemed by all the "Ministry," especially the young ones, whom she treated with a motherly affection. Their best room was always opened to itinerant evangelists. Whitefield had been entertained there, had slept in the bed, and inaugurated the bright brass warming-pan which now was in such constant requisition to ward off chills and rheumatism from the sacred bodies of the "preachers." Her eldest son David was Mrs. Roger's hope. She had early dedicated him to the Lord.

The good woman, albeit somewhat alive to them, did her best to overlook her husband's foibles in the small matters of truth and honesty, and to estimate as much as she could to the credit of the other side, but somehow she felt with all his groaning there was still a balance against old Roger in the spiritual ledger, and this balance she hoped would be made up by David's consecration. She rejoiced to see him grow up strong and tall, and David never forgot her gentleness, her love, her soft hand on his head, her tender and incessant care, and the ever-living smile towards him upon her handsome face. Surely, surely if faith is worth any one's while, and devotion and sincerity are recognised by any higher powers, Mrs. Roger might fairly have looked forward to the accomplishment of her fondest dream, to see her tall boy an active and eloquent minister of the gospel. But the sins of Mr. Roger senior must have been too heavy for her.

David was sent to the grammar-school at Newcastle, and there fed the pride of his parents by fresh successes. Aged ministers, taking their toddy in Old Roger's back parlour after a "trying day," would hear the proud mother tell with

a fluttering earnestness of David and of her plans and they would lay their hands upon his head and solemnly pray the Lord "to bless the lad, and this our dear Sister whom thou hast moved to consecrate this flesh of her flesh and bone of her bone unto Thee." The worthy apostles were sincere and hopeful with much of the sincerity and hopefulness of routine. Young Roger, thoughtful and never garrulous, watched with large clear eyes, and listened with big quick ears to all that went on in his father's parlour. Nothing escaped him. He saw the ministers at chapel, he held retentively all their prayers and sermons, he watched their conduct at home. Without meaning to be unfilial he noted his father's ways and weaknesses and compared them with his professions. Then he felt this to be very wicked and tried to cast away from him the thoughts that would come, but they all came back again, and long before he left the grammar-school he had a solemn feeling in his mind that the "ministry" was not a field for him. However, one day a man visited their house, who won his admiration. He was a celebrated divine, a Doctor of Divinity, with a strong massive face, white hair, a gentle tongue and serious manner at home, and a terrible force in the pulpit. This man seemed to fix his eye on the young Roger, then seventeen years of age, and read him through and through. His text was, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." He pictured the tower of Siloam so vividly that young Roger looked up and ducked, thinking the stones were coming down on him. Then the youth, watching him trembling, thought he felt himself taken up by those strong hands, laid out flat on the big Bible upon the velvet cushion, and anatomised there and then for the benefit of the congregation. He reached home and buried his face in his mother's lap, and told her weeping that he was going to be a good boy and give himself to the ministry. If he could preach like Dr. Sprat, he would be satisfied he "had a call." So later on David was sent to a dissenting College near London. There in the study of ecclesiastical history, the canon, metaphysics, so-called, and other sacred and profane matters, Roger's strong mind revelled for three years. He had left his religious enthusiasm behind him,

and he now drank to intoxication of the stores of knowledge. Every hour not given to exercise was devoted to reading and to thought—and at length to writing down what he thought. Out of this current of dreamy life, he would find himself repeatedly drawn by professors and fellow-students, in order that he might take part in religious meetings, religious exercises, theological disputations and he was forced to produce specimen sermons and to read them, in order that they might be openly criticised, to the dozen and a half of students who constituted the college. Of the mental calibre of some of these young men he had the utmost contempt, of their earnestness as sons of the prophets or future apostles he in spite of some struggles with himself could get up no high opinion. Some, to his idea, had too evidently come in to exchange the active life of toil in common ways, for a post of authority and a respectable position. More and more as Roger's *mind* seemed to get out into light his *soul* drew into shadow. He grew impatient of these interruptions, and critical of their value and aims. Were these men about him honest? If they believed one half of what came so glibly from their tongues, could they rest calm, or weigh temporal interests, and laugh and chatter over each others' weaknesses as they did? He was morbidly alive to the faults and blind to the earnestness of his friends. At length came the inevitable break-off. The days of probation were nearing to their end. Roger was directed to prepare for the last examination, and to indite a sermon on the text, "All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God." Said he to worthy Doctor Lucy, the principal:—

ROGER: What Scripture do you mean, if you please, Mr. Principal?

DR. LUCY: All. All Scripture is by the inspiration of God.

ROGER: The Apocryphal, Doctor?

DR. LUCY: Certainly not.

ROGER: Genesis, Sir?

DR. LUCY: Of course.

ROGER: The Song of Solomon, Sir?

DR. LUCY: Most assuredly—a divine and most gracious parable.

ROGER : Then I can't do it !

DR. LUCY : What ! Mr. Roger ? Why, what is this ? Has the grace of God failed ? Have we been nursing in our midst an unbeliever ?

ROGER : I hope not, Sir. Nearly all I believe I learned *here*—nearly all I disbelieve came out of the teaching *here*. You know, Doctor, far better than I do the history of the Canon, but all your explanation and arguments leave so much more to be believed than I can see my way to accept, that I am obliged honestly to say, I don't believe it, as at present advised. What more can I do ?

"O thou enemy !" murmured the poor Doctor incoherently, not knowing what else to say. "Destructions are coming to a perpetual end. Let us go to dinner, Mr. Roger. The bell has already rung. I will call a meeting of the faculty to consider your case in the afternoon."

There was deep and real sorrow among the faculty to hear of Roger's difficulties with the Canon. All liked him personally, some had looked to him as one of the most hopeful of their students. It was very curious to see how they tried to account for this spiritual aberration in every way but the true one.

"It is an outbreak of intellectual pride," said the Rev. Jehoahaz Inwards. "The young man has ever been self-confident as I have frequently noticed in the class discussions. An indisposition to accept any truth without subjecting it to close scrutiny—carping at words—sifting evidences—calling for positive proofs ; none of that large and comprehensive faith which comes of a deep spiritual communion with God—a faith which swallows all things. This intellectual pride, my dear brethren, is killing the age, chilling faith, awakening discontent and spreading unbelief. Our poor young friend needs to be taken in hand by the Divine Spirit and taught the virtue of humility."

"Think you that he hath not incurred any unrighteous affection that may have drawn his mind and body away from the entire consecration," said the venerable Professor of Exegesis, the Rev. Irenæus Busby (D.D. of Alsatia College, Pennsylvania). "It is often thus that the tempter entereth in, that the soul is overshadowed by the world and

the flesh, that the proud mind corrupted by the things of time rejecteth the things of eternity."

"No, brethren," said the Principal, an honest and sober old pietist, "I will answer for Mr. Roger's probity and morality. Never was there a nobler or purer character within the precincts of this institution. No, my brethren—his doubts are sincere doubts and they are pure doubts—they come not of defective virtue or of self-willed pride, but of a nature keenly sensitive on the question of truth—longing too much for the absolute verity, unattainable by mortal man. When men begin with too high an ideal they are often thrown off their balance if they find themselves repulsed by its impracticability. Our friend wants mathematical precision, where the demonstration is not mathematical but spiritual, not an operation of science but of faith."

So the worthy brethren went spinning round and round the real question, and stating Roger's case in evangelical platitudes, whereas all that the poor fellow asked them to do, was to believe that he accepted the truths of the Gospel and wished and tried to live by them, but did not see his way to adopt a Canon for which he could find no divine authority and which in his opinion confuted itself.

"Answer me, answer me!" he kept saying to himself, as the professors took him one by one and affectionately urged him for his eternal salvation's sake to swallow a pill he could not even get between his teeth.

In the end, having been duly tested, David Roger was returned home as "a vessel that would hold no water, being unsound."

Frightful indeed was this catastrophe to his mother, who shed many a tear over her son's fall.

The elder Mr. Roger fell into a healthy rage. He wanted to know why he should be the father of a blank atheist—a question very much in the nature of a conundrum, though possibly had he looked clearly and honestly into his own heart he might have found reason why, on his own theories of Providence, he had no right to complain of it. For himself he was bound in a superstition up to the exigency of which he did not act. The purity of purpose in David

Roger stood at a low mark in the vulgar spiritual estimate beside the worthless cant of the grocer's pious humility. The mother, deep in her heart, could not help feeling how much more admirable was her great boy with his frank face, clear eyes, and honest truthfulness, to the bleary-eyed man who held secrets of business in his desk which he would not broach to her ; but she also was involved in a net. She felt that the feeling was wicked and tried to drive it away. However, although David urged his honesty, his belief in all the great doctrines of Christianity, though he declared he could not conscientiously accept those dogmas by which it was sought to fence them in and render them impregnable, his father would not listen. Principal Lucy had pronounced him incorrigible—the faculty had reported him as “unsound,” and such a report is as bad of an evangelical minister, as it is of a ship or a cask of claret. The old man treated the younger with contempt and harshness, moved thereto perhaps by a feeling that he required to make up for some lost ground in the moral hemisphere by extra activity in that of spirituality. David, eager only for a quiet life, for time to ponder these great things, as yet more an unsatisfied inquirer than a confirmed doubter, became conscious that if he remained much longer in contact with the strange mixture of enthusiasm and want of principle which surrounded him, he would be obliged to break away altogether from any foundation in faith, made up his mind to leave, and getting a hundred pounds from Mr. Roger, and bidding sad farewells to his mother, went away to Canada, where he had obtained the situation in which we have found him.

In Canada Roger had wisely kept his opinions to himself. He thought it right, as well as discreet, to attend regularly every Sunday morning to hear prayers in which he could devoutly join read at the church. He listened, as respectfully as he could to the rather crude exertions of Doctor Troutbeck, and he would certainly have rather cut off his right hand than say a word to instil a doubt or unsettle a principle in any of his pupils. Yet, on Taddy's mind, the influence of Roger's past was destined to exert no indifferent force. We have mentioned that Doctor Jobson, to push

his eldest boy on in the studies, for he was anxious to send him as soon as possible to the University of Toronto, which in effect is a superior high-school, had engaged David Roger to bring the boy on in Euclid, three nights a week. At these lessons Mrs. Jobson became an interested assistant.

Marian Jobson's earlier life, in those days when Women's Colleges were unheard of and woman's intelligence was supposed to need only the most superficial culture, although it was seen from many distinguished instances that women could be both learned and capable, had not been calculated to bring out the powers of a naturally quick mind. The qualifications thought in those days to be requisite for a woman in good society, may be judged of from the singular prospectuses of the "Establishments for Young Ladies," kept by daughters of deceased clergymen, or sometimes by reduced "ladies of quality." "Deportment," which perhaps has ceased too much to be a study, since it is no longer highly-esteemed, music and the use of the globes, a crabbed handwriting and an imperfect idea of grammar and spelling, together with some elegant needlework accomplishments, constituted in too many cases the entire stock programme of such establishments, to which professors of French and dancing added at an extra cost their quota of refining knowledge. So that women, who felt capable of thinking, had to turn tutors to themselves, if they would rise above the dead level of the society acquirements.

When our hero's mother found herself shut up in Cornwall to associate with a few persons and these not of cleverness or intelligence, she was naturally driven to reading as the means of dissipating the inevitable *ennui*. Jobson was a reader, fond of works of culture and thought, eager to study new books on science, or to peruse the political and intellectual reviews of the day. In all his work his wife loved to partake—and by the time of which we speak, her mind developed by reading and reflection was one well worthy the intercourse of a thoughtful man.

Roger, coming to Queen's House to pass the hour at Euclid, often stayed to spend two or three more in talking with his intelligent friends. They were, surprised to

discover in him, a deep and thorough knowledge of many of those intellectual sciences of which they had only touched the fringe ; and Mrs. Jobson, forgetting his "Northumbrian burr," liked to listen to the discussions which used to arise between Jobson and the schoolmaster, and occasionally struck in herself with acute remarks which won Roger's attention. In this way there gradually grew up a little school of philosophy and learning, in the plain parlours of a wooden house, in the middle of a half-developed civilisation. Books were ordered and read in concert, ideas exchanged, views formed, and excursions made into regions which from education and prejudice, had long been looked upon by the Doctor and his wife as forbidden ground. Incautiously the grown-up explorers in these perilous fields of science and philosophy forgot that their discussions were overheard by the young Jobson, who often, while they thought he was poring over his lessons in a corner, was listening with eager ears to Roger pouring out, now that he had an audience, views, often profound, often paradoxical, often startling and often, I fear, "heterodox." In this way David Roger unintentionally became something more to the youth than a teacher of the "humanities," and little Master Jobson before he had mastered the elements of learning was wandering with feeble and excited footsteps amid the hard and rock-set fields of human speculation.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE UNCHAINING OF HOPE.

SPRING ! Spring ! The old rage of young poets. Mine of endless metaphors—type of all youth and hope and promise. The locks of the Canadian winter had been unbarred by the potent Sun-god. The white and crystal fetters had dropped off from wood and mere. In the new world the old story :

*Diffugere nives, redeunt jam gramina campis,
Arboribusque comæ :
Mutat terra vices, et decrescentia ripas
Flumina prætereunt.*

Yes the verdure comes again : *redeunt jam gramina*. The crisp, white ermine which had so warmly wrapt the frail blades of the fall wheat and shrouded the ridgy fallows, had shrunk and shrunk until here and there it grew bare on warm knolls, and raw and bony rock came up like the skeleton of poverty through the rags. Then the fine light green of the fall wheat. By-and-by only dishevelled remnants lay about in patches wherever there was covert from the consuming rays. Again—*decrescentia ripas flumina prætereunt!* One day the central ice-bridge of the great river broke away with roar and swirl, and the dark imprisoned waters leaped out to light and freedom, the edges of the shelving masses that clung to either bank, dropping off yard by yard into the warming waters, and swelling the stream, just as old Horace sang, in another land, so many hundred years ago. Then of a sudden the ground yielded up its frost with many a sigh and upheaval and copious moist sweat of Nature, and strange movement of the rich crisp mould. The pellucid crystal that had jewelled the skeleton branches of the trees gave place to dark dampness, from which sprang life mossy and green, young and virgin. *Arboribusque comæ!* The reign of ice

and snow had hardly stayed when the tender-tufted verdure gathered on the twigs, pushing its way so fast that a watchful eye could almost measure the progress from eve to morn. Like a miracle the days grew soft and warm. Great watery clouds with grey gentle faces came up out of the west, over from the wilderness, over from the far Pacific, laden with Nature's elixir and softly shed it down over field and fell. Then in full dress, with life most buoyant and glorious, stood forth the Earth, a fair wife of Nature, breathing of Hope, and blooming with promise of the prolific future.

A long promised holiday, a long, long June day, to be spent at Farmer Morton's, with Aunt Bertie, and father and mother, and all the junior hopefuls, and Bathsheba, whose bright turban now surmounted a mop of curly white, and, joy of joys! Mister David Roger! This gathering with all its lively preparations, its jolly drive, its play and laughter, the immeasurable resources of Farmer Morton's dairy, of Mrs. Morton's jam cupboard, of Mary Morton's cooking,—the great rapids with their ceaseless roar, the wondrous circle of big dark firs on the mound, where the dried cones lay thick, and the brown needle-like spires covered the ground with a slippery carpet whereon it was such fun to see Aunt Bertie tumble, or papa measure his length, or ecstasy of ecstasies, prompting of roaring delight, to behold Bathsheba rolling a helpless bale of flesh! the hide-and-seek between the big boles; the search in the maple woods amid decaying leaves for the cold, pale flower of the "death-plant;" or in rotting stumps for the dry velvety "punk," which, from a single spark would glow with brightness emitting a fragrant odour; the rivalry of wild-flower gathering for mamma, the crowning of little Tiny, the last and smallest infant, with chaplets; the race with Davy Roger, who spite of his long legs was always beaten: was not all this a vision for a boy to live in day and night a long time before the blest reality could come? To Taddy, eleven years old, growing big and strong for his age, and full of nerve and energy, the dream was sublime.

It was a wonderful procession that set off from Cornwall—from the Queen's House, as Doctor Jobson had named

his place in memory of old Barbadoes—Mr. Morton's large two horse wagon sent down for the ladies leading the way, and the spider-like buggies to which the men and boys confided their lives, briskly following. Deep voices, loud shrill shouts and chatter, silver tones all mingled together in the fine air. It was early. The dew still sparkled on the blades and gemmed the fresh green leaves of bush and tree. By-and-by all got out and climbed a steep hill, behind their carriages, hearing all the while a mighty and terrible roar, until they reached the top, and there under the peerless sky and the glowing splendour of the sun, lay before them a magic scene.

The high bank of the river, which here ran deep below the spot on which they stood, was scarped away in bold cliffs that nodded and frowned over a Cyclopean turmoil of rock and wave. From miles above to miles below, with huge white-crested manes tossing, tossing in a furious race, like a charge of millions of sea-horses over a vast arena, rushed roaring the mad breakers. Down the broad channel, a mile across, strewn below with huge iron rocks that clung immovable to their deep foundations beneath, rushed as if lashed to a desperate rage by the rough restraint, the mighty Saint Lawrence. Nothing could be seen but curling masses of foam, tons upon tons of water rolling and roaring, huge waves wildly dancing, fiercely overleaping each other, crashing together, hurling their crested heads in mad tumult against the imperturbable rocks. A great scene of snowy motion, a wild confusion of hoary rage, an uproar indescribable and terrible, at which the boys stood awe-struck with open mouths, and a timid girl clung and hid her face in her father's coat. For the noise! What a sound welled up from that ceaseless commotion! What a depth and power it had! How it shook the earth, and filled the arch of heaven, and paralysed the soul with an awful majesty of sound. Beyond, through the fine spray that rose in clouds over the strife of waters, stretched along the green islands, with their reddish sides fretted away by the impatient stream, and the tops of the cliffs bright with verdure and foliage. And on all glittered the morning sun, and here and there in the mist, could be

seen jewelled bits of rainbow, exquisite in their setting of frosted silver.

Aunt Bertie had gone out a little from the party and with hands clasped gazed at the marvellous panorama before her. They were all so busy with their enjoyment that they did not notice her agitation. The scene always strangely affected her. The sound, the sight stirred her very soul within her. A tear was on her cheek. She sat down unconsciously on a little knoll. Taddy was at her side in a moment. He saw the tear and kissed it away. He slipped his hand in hers. Marian's quick eye detected this little by-play. She motioned to her husband. He sauntered towards the pair.

"Come, Bertie," he said, taking his sister by both hands and raising her, "you shall drive with me and Taddy the rest of the way."

Her face brightened as she turned away from the thunder and tumult below to her brother's kind and handsome face. Then giving another longing gaze towards the rapids she mounted to her seat, watching thence the surging river as it remained within their view.

It was a day of Eden. Calm, sunny, pure and fair, with brightness in every eye and lightness in every step, and a welling joy in every heart. The farm with all its sights and sounds, the parlour-kitchen with its exhaustless store of good things, the sunny fields and the cool shady woods, the river here above the rapids spreading out in a majestic calm, mirroring brightness, its quiet dignity contrasting with the madness of its troubled course but a short way further down. The children had never known such joy. Amid the round shafts of the firs, in the centre of the great clump, with the everlasting green canopy far, far above them, the party gathered and ate their lunch, incomparable meal which Mary had prepared, and which they thought would never end. When at length it was over the active infantry dispersed, leaving the elders to lounge and chat together, while Farmer Morton mounted his horse to visit his fields, and Roger, bearing little Tiny the youngest girl upon his shoulder, and followed by two or three others, tramped off through the wood. Taddy and Bertha made for the river,

where a little wooden jetty had been run out into the smoother water, from which they could see the long line of curling breakers and hear the wrangling tumult. They examined the beautiful little skiff which was tied to one of the supports of the pier.

An hour went by. The air was soft and warm. The odour of the pines was balmy, the couch on which Doctor Jobson lay stretched out on his back was soft, his big straw hat covered his eyes. There was a gentle purr of voices from Mrs. Jobson and Mrs. Morton, who were sitting near comparing household notes. The shrill cries of the children which had sounded here and there under the high arches and among the fretted pillars ceased. All was still. It was a day to the good Doctor of perfect luxury and repose.

—A shout ! A tremendous shout ! The voice of Davy Roger sharp and distinct, not a joyous cry, but one of loud alarm. Something in its tone thrilled the Doctor, and made the women jump to their feet. Again ! From beyond the house, and toward the river. Doctor Jobson instantly ran in the direction from which the alarm came. Across the road, through the stable-yard, over a field which lay between the house and river, and down to the pier on which stood David Roger, shouting loudly. The Doctor passed Mary Morton who had run out from the kitchen, and held the children at her side.

“What is the matter ?” cried the Doctor to her breathless. Mary’s face was pale. She pointed out to the river, to a small object which could just be distinguished in the glittering sunlight, an object half a mile out in the stream, in the stream that swiftly went its way towards the great rapids. It was a tiny boat. A small form in the stern moved to and fro to time as another figure plied a pair of sculls.

“Taddy and Bertha ! O my God !”

In a minute the father was at the schoolmaster’s side. Roger had thrown off his coat and hat, and was calling out directions over the water to the boat which as they stood was some hundred yards higher up the river. Quiet but strong ran the great stream downwards with wrinkling ripples on its face.

"Keep her head up—*up* Taddy! steady! that's right my lad. *Pull* Miss Jobson!"

The great man, Jobson could see, was trembling like a child, with the effort to keep calm.

"They have gradually fallen down some distance," he said to Jobson, "but if she pulls like that and the boy keeps steady, it will be all right *yet*."

"Head up Taddy!"

"All right!" sang the boy. They were certainly drawing nearer, though Jobson could detect the steady sweep of the frail boat downwards, downwards towards those great white jaws that lay waiting below.

"All right! Pull away Auntie! one, two—one, two, there she goes."

Bertha's arm plied steadily, as if she felt no fear, and it was seen that though drifting with the current, the easy skiff was making good way shorewards.

Every minute seemed an hour to the watchers. The women had gathered above and stood with fear in their faces spellbound. Mrs. Jobson was too strong to trouble her husband at such a crisis.

Still the boat came on, still it moved down. It was now not more than two hundred yards away—but it had passed the pier and was at least fifty feet below it. They looked up and down in vain for some other boat or canoe. Woodmen had borrowed the latter in the morning. Roger clenched his teeth.

"I daren't jump in," he cried. "It would frighten Taddy and paralyse them both. Bravo Taddy! keep her head towards the pier. There's no danger dear boy!"

But he turned to the Doctor as he said it.

"Do you see that long line of white scour out there?" he said. "That is where the down stream meets the strong eddy that comes up round the bay from the point. If they get over that they are safe, but it needs skill. Keep her head straight a moment Taddy!" he shouted in strong excitement. They were close upon that white thin line, seeming to be a mere big wrinkle from the pier, but for that small boat a tremendous force.

Doctor Jobson watched with eager eyes. On came the skiff, alas ! now fully a hundred feet below them. Its sharp nose touched the line, rose a few inches, cut through ! she was halfway across. It needed a firm and cunning hand to manage that nice manœuvre. In a second the stern swept down, the bow swept up. She rocked. Taddy dropped the lines, and before he could recover them Bertie's stroke had sent the boat out again. Turning round bow forwards it swept down the stream.

An involuntary groan of agony escaped from the pent-up bosom of the men. The schoolmaster lifted his arms to plunge off the pier.

"Not so," gasped Jobson, seizing him, "You could not reach them. The only hope is there, *there !*" And he pointed to the end of the promontory. They darted off together. The women above them clasping each other's hands went on their knees.

Bertha no sooner saw what had happened, than she dropped the sculls on either side, stood up in the boat facing the rapids, and throwing off her straw hat, unbound her hair. Then she fell on her knees and gazed on the quick coming surf. Little Taddy could be seen behind her, kneeling too. They were already within the roar of the thundering waves, they could neither hear nor be heard.

The two men were racing madly towards the point. As the boat neared the surf it did not drift so quickly. Probably a very deep valley lies before the line of rocky embankment over which the river breaks so furiously. They reached the point only a half minute before the boat. She came on with the pale small faces looking stedfastly on their doom. They saw nothing else. Doctor Jobson could clearly distinguish the features. They were only some thirty feet away from where he stood, when the boat gave a leap, a shiver, a dart forward.

"Good-bye, Taddy !" screamed the father, rushing into the surf ; but the terrific tumult drowned his voice.

A leap—and she had shot into the turmoil, up to the crest of a wave, over it, lurching as she went. Taddy and Bertha lay hold of the thwarts.

"Great Heaven—*through*! Run Roger!"

Down an unseen channel between the rocks, with waters curling and hissing around it, dashed the frail skiff, a thing of life. Along the shore leaping madly went Roger possessed—Jobson could not keep up with him. Another big wave—another leap. Just as it seems as if the skiff would be swallowed up, its bow twists shivering: it jumps over an awful chasm, its very lightness saves it, it is running over a vast smooth shelf of rock. The current has borne it now inwards to within a hundred feet of the shore. There is a bay here hemmed in by a second point. Oh! that they could get the skiff over those few intervening breakers! Again with a shudder Roger sees the boat glide off the safe, smooth shelf and charge a roaring breaker whose great crest curls savagely over a green gulf of water. It has ceased to be real this darting thing. It is a miraculous skiff with an angel in it, a vision, floating in the deceptive mists of the rapid. But no. This time it runs up, hovers for a moment on the crest, and then as if twisted by an invisible hand is thrown off the top sidewise, a fearful leap of twenty feet, out, out clear of surges, into the eddying pools between them and the shore.

Roger has already dashed into the whirling waters, his powerful frame cleaving through them, all too slowly. Jobson is panting on the bank, he sees the boat upside down, he sees a white dress floating round and round, and wonder of wonders! a little figure is bravely striking out upwards with the eddy but moving towards the shore. He runs. "Bravo Taddy." He plunges in and swims for him. Four lives are in the water.

Meanwhile Roger bravely battles his way. He can see the reeling boat. The dress has disappeared. At length he reaches the place. He is caught in a miniature Corryvreckan and spite of his great strength whirled round and round. But he has hold of the boat and looks out keenly. A pale face suddenly swirls up under his arm. He grasps the long hair, raises the nostrils above the water, takes a breath, and lifting a prayer to God, bravely lets go and strikes out with his precious burden. The strong eddy coming up bears him along.



"The farmer threw the end of his horses' rein to Roger."

Doctor Jobson, swimming out, had received into his arms Master Taddy, who, meant by Providence to worry the world, was not to be drowned even in the great rapids of the Long Sault. Now they stood safely on the bank and his voice rang cheerily to the struggling schoolmaster. But Roger found it a terrible task. While he was pressing on, Farmer Morton, who had ridden up on the alarm and seen the proceedings from the bank above, arrived at Jobson's side. The farmer, with his wits always about him, when he saw Roger swim off, had ridden home and now appeared with some blankets and a bottle of brandy. He had just jumped off his horse when a cry of despair came from Roger.

"O! cramp! cramp!"

In a moment the farmer unbuckled the rein of his horse and rushing into the water up to his middle threw the end to Roger now only a few yards away and drew him ashore bearing the senseless form of Bertha.

They laid her on the bank. Mrs. Jobson and Mrs. Morton had arrived. The doctor directed the operations. Bertha had received a blow upon the brow—a purple and blue mark. For a long time she lay lifeless. They chafed her hands, they rolled her to and fro, they gave her brandy. At length she heaved a sigh and looked at Jobson.

"What does this mean?" she said. "How long have I been asleep?"

Doctor Jobson seized her hand and examined her carefully. His hand was trembling. Marian noticed it.

He gave a spoonful more of brandy.

"Why," said Bertha, "how odd you look! Your whiskers are getting grey."

"You are not well Bertha—do you feel any pain?"

"Only there," pointing to the bruise on her forehead.

"But how light my head is—Where am I?"

"Oh! you are all right. Shut your eyes a moment. We are going to carry you a little way."

Morton and Jobson took her up. Mrs. Jobson was forcing brandy on the reluctant Roger who swallowed an immense dose just to please her. He could scarcely move,

but his eye had grown bright when Taddy dripping wet had clasped his hand and clung to him.

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When they got her to the house and laid her on the bed, Bertha suddenly jumped up and looked into the glass.

"Why how funny!" she cried, staring gravely at her brother. "I look so old—and yet the world seems so new to me."

"Thank God!" cried Dr. Jobson putting his arms round her neck and crying like a child, as he had done when she entered on that fearful dream. Well might he thank God—for hope was now unchained.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LIFE BECOMES SERIOUS.

WHEN long parentheses have gone out of fashion, except perhaps in the speeches and articles of a distinguished Statesman, a parenthesis which has lasted through three books and seems as if it would go on for ever, must be owned even by an unfriendly critic to be one of the bravest performances ever yet exhibited in that line of rhetoric.

Long parentheses, which held so favourite a position in English style in some stages of our literary history, went out I suppose because people found they usually embodied matter of petty interest and were not worth reading. But I remember a very clever analyst of rhetoric, a professor of elocution, who pointed out that in Shakespeare especially and in the Bible—a parenthesis often contained the most serious and important statement in the paragraph. This is the case with the present history. It is nearly all a parenthesis. We have reminded the reader that this rhetorical monster has already occupied three books. It will continue for nearly five more. But we are warned that as yet we have only brought the hero to his eleventh or twelfth year, and if we ever mean to get him started in life, married, worried, famed, hated and disgraced, we must jog on a little faster. Therefore must we be excused from following with too close particularity his youthful fortunes, and be justified in carrying him *per saltum* to those “years of discretion,” which so often prove to be the most indiscreet of a man’s life.

Young Thaddæus Jobson, aged eighteen and more, had returned with a degree in Arts and a medal as first prizeman from the College of Toronto, and his fate hung in a balance. The intervening years had been full of events all

deeply influencing the formation of this young man's character. Bertha Jobson's miraculous return to reason and his own rescue from death, had in a few hours opened the boy's mind to ideas of human life and its wondrously deep and wide relations, in a manner and to an extent which was a Revelation—a grand vision of responsibilities beyond the little stage on which he had hitherto danced and mimed in a mechanical sort of marionnettery, if we may concoct a word unknown to either the French or English languages, and with a certain blind adherence to the dictates of nature and to instructions, maternal, paternal, pedagogic, and priestly, which had in it much of ingenuousness and very little of intelligence: a state of mind that most of us of any age can easily recall, who were brought up in the orthodox training of childhood. Some ideas, however, as we have seen, some germs of thought-inspiring, conscience-awakening ideas—had already been sown in the not too stony or too arid soil of the boy's mind. Those discussions and readings to which Roger the school-master brought so much knowledge, Marian Jobson so much of her woman's wit, and her husband so much scientific accuracy of treatment and healthy English common-sense, had stirred the deep wells of Master Jobson's being and made him think. When Tacitus relates that the mother of Agricola—one of the finest of those *silhouettes* in Roman history, which are so precious, and alas! so tantalising from the imperfection of their outlines—tried to restrain the youthful hero's precocious taste for philosophical studies, the historian, although he commends her for her prudence, fails afterwards to show that the effect on the noble Ventimilian, was in the end either enervating or injurious. If he learned to think with rare conscientiousness, to doubt with more than ordinary wisdom, and to feel the true grandeur of life with a sensitiveness and a sensibility above his fellows, one may judge that the temporary unsettling of conventional ideas in his mind was no harm but a great and permanent good. To teach young minds the attitude of faith in things as they are generally accepted or believed, is sometimes and with some minds more perilous than to instruct them that most things are open to

controversy and that it is not an evil or a sin to doubt. And philosophy is but the comparison and sifting of the world's doubts—the action and reaction of minds on questions which are unsolved and insoluble. To know that these questions exist can do no harm—nay, only good—to any genuine mind; and to awaken to them long after definite and rigid boundaries of thought have been pedantically laid down, is most often a revelation full of dire danger and pregnant with the most bitter evils. Over many matters in religion and thought, which to few boys are even suspected, Thaddæus Jobson begun to ponder, weakly but curiously: when all of a sudden, he and his precious aunt, were swept off one day into the stream of the St. Lawrence, and in half an hour he passed through all the terrors of losing her out of his life and dying himself—with the ensuing ecstasy of his deliverance from a horrible fate and her restoration to a rational and delightful existence.

“Mamma,” said Master Taddy some weeks after this event, when the novelty and excitement had in some degree subsided, and Bertha like a child growing into a woman at the pace of a month in a day, was delighting them all with her lovely brightness and exquisite gentleness and naïveté, “Mamma, what do you think I ought to be?”

Taddy was sitting in a favourite position beside his mother. She had a low easy chair, without arms, to give her elbows freedom as she worked, and was at the moment engaged in the useful, if homely, occupation of darning a pair of indispensables belonging to the youngest Jobson, while a pile of various articles lay in a basket at her side to be overhauled in due course. He was on a stool at her feet, with his head leaning against her knee, and had been reading to her, nothing less than a novel of Miss Edgeworth's. He had read with all a boy's eagerness, fast and feelingly, and this takes it out of a person, boy or man: so he was resting, the book fallen on the floor and Taddy Jobson looking out with open eyes into space. The great river seemed to be before him, and its roar was in his ears, and its dashing, flashing waters to rush past and he floated on them—facing the dread unknown. The thrill of nervous exaltation which had followed on that startling moment was still quick within him.

"Mamma. What do you think I ought to be?"

The mother's sensitive nature caught from his tone the profound anxiety that lurked in his question. She dropped her work on her lap and her soft hand passed over the boy's temple.

"Why, Taddy," she said, "what makes you think of that?"

"Well you know—I—I have been thinking that it was very funny that Aunt Bertha and I were saved the other day. The Dean says it was a miracle, that no one *could* believe it, if it had not happened under their own eyes, and that no one could possibly explain it from natural causes."

The mother smiled a little at the Dean's professional fondness for the miraculous.

"The Dean no doubt is right in attributing your safety to the intervention of Providence, my son. Certainly the chances were all against you, but there were also natural causes beyond doubt. There were currents which happily caught your boat; and some people say the skiff was of peculiar construction; and there were Mr. Roger and your father at hand at the right moment—all very natural causes. Without them you would both have been drowned."

"Yes but you believe in Providence, don't you?" said Taddy turning round and looking up into his mother's face. She endured his clear earnest eyes without blenching. She was not a woman to unsettle his mind by foolish doubtings unexplained.

"Yes I do, Taddy—thoroughly. God watches over us every day and minute, I believe in my very heart, and is not far from every one of us, as Paul said so beautifully at Athens. *How* his Providence works, what it means, is more difficult to say. It seems to me a deep question—too deep, I fear, for us to solve—too deep, Taddy, for you to be thinking of now."

"Why? I believe in Providence," said Taddy. "I thank God every morning and night for saving me and Aunt Bertha. I am glad you believe in it too"—he added timidly—"because in that book Mr. Roger was reading to you, and you and he were talking about, the writer said that there were '*delusions*' about Providence, and I thought

from the way you all talked there might be some truth in what he said."

Marian Jobson caught her breath, and looked at Taddy. It suddenly broke upon her that he had grown into intelligence swiftly, beyond her suspecting, and that he had been permitted incautiously to listen to discussions which none of those who partook in them, had thought likely to interest the boy who sat within hearing at work at his lessons.

"You misunderstood us Taddy. We were talking over the opinions of a well-known and very deep thinker on this very question, and of course when he seemed to be right in his strictures on extreme views held by certain people, whom we call 'enthusiasts,' we were bound to admit it, but if you had listened attentively to all that was said you would have understood that neither your father nor Mr. Roger gave way to the argument that the world was governed by chance, or lay at the mercy of a set of mechanical rules devised, as the works of a watch, to keep it going with relentless regularity, but that there was working within and beside the laws of Nature a personal Will of God, which we call Providence. But you see my dear boy—from the words I have had to use, and which I don't well know how to simplify or even to illustrate perfectly—what a hard subject it is for you. You have scarcely understood me."

"No," said Taddy, whose habit it was to be frank, "I don't understand very well, but I am sure it was God that saved me, and I should like to remember it all my life."

The boy's head, she could feel, was burning a little and his eyes were dilated and earnest.—Such conversations are rare in young lives and when they happen are of wondrous importance. In the era of youthful enthusiasm the current runs so swift and deep, its temperature is so feverish, its direction so uncertain! Looking back on life any earnest mind may trace ancient empty channels through which, like the old bed of the Oxus, once ran the full flush of an enthusiasm, now broken and scattered into dribbling rills or alas! dried up entirely and lost for ever.

Let us not trespass further on the talk that then ensued. Such communings are too sacred to be lightly reported; enough to have gained a glimpse of the direction in which

Taddy's mind was looking and his feelings were flowing. The development of Marian Jobson's mind is proved in this conversation to have been rapid and powerful. Thenceforth mother and son marched on together.

From that hour Master Taddy Jobson threw himself into life with an earnestness that made his friends wonder. The doctor watched it anxiously when he saw the pale-faced boy bending over his books till late at night, and when the mother brought him notes and memoranda, and little pages of verses in crabbed hand-writings all indicating that our hero was thinking, and that thought was beginning to take shape in his mind. But he was strong in arm and leg and active in sport, and now that Master Skirrow had gone away became what the Romans called *facile princeps*, among the boys at the Grammar-school. The alert steady eye, the handsome face, the growing strength, the undaunted spirit, and above all the intelligent and almost delicate refinement of his face and mien, mastered every one younger than he, and captivated his elders. Hence Taddy became before he was fourteen and went to the University, something more than the school-boy to Roger, and the son to his father and mother. And, unlike his father, he quietly assumed the predominance due to his seniority in the family circle, where from the fair-haired Ethel, who had followed him in birth-right, to the thicklegged "Hal"—Harry so-called, after Colonel Harry Jobson, the Doctor's second brother, who was winning honours in the military service in the East India Company,—he led and ruled them all by sheer force of character and yet with gentle brotherliness. What would he not have done for them? what would they not have done for him?

Roger as we have seen was the one who had most felt the influence exerted by Thaddæus Jobson on those with whom he came in contact. The half-fierceness, half-feminineness of the boy's character touched chords in his own nature which, if not so fine, responded in strong tones.

They walked together, boated together, chatted together, until the master's intellect began to be plumbed a little by the boy's wit, and he and Roger conversed on things great and deep. The master did not force him but he never

repressed his flights of thought and fancy, letting the young mind soar and flutter as it pleased, knowing that a few falls would be healthy to it, and that out of feeble flying and sound tumbling would come strengthful wings and a bold career.

Two letters which passed during these years may be allowed to tell their own tale.

Folliroy,
Newport, Xmas day, 18—.

My own dear Taddy,

A merry Xmas ! Here I am with dear mamma and your Aunt Isabel trying to make ourselves as happy as we can ; but when we look at the black we are wearing for my dear father, and think of brother Hal fighting away there in the North-West of India, and sister Susie ill when we last heard from her in Capetown, and your harebrained uncle Dick in his ship somewhere in the China seas, and poor little Willie lying buried now for three years in the military burial ground at Jamaica, and all of you, so dear to me, away far away, I feel naturally very sad. How strange for us all to be so separated ! I remember our last Xmas together, and the fun we had, and I sit and think very often about you—for you know Taddy, somehow I have an idea you are going to be *a great man* ! Marian will think I ought not to say so to you—but you know Taddy you and I are more like brother and sister than aunt and nephew. All the brightest days of my life seem to be associated with you. I am only a child. They call me “Baby” here. But you cannot think how much I read and how clever I am getting. I have learned French from a poor French lady whose husband, an Englishman, died and left her with one child : Madam de Lossy she calls herself, because she has resumed her maiden name. She is so clever and nice—a sort of substitute for you Taddy—but far far below you ! She is timid and you are bold—she is afraid of a boat, and even dear mamma won’t let me try a pull in a skiff, though there is a little river near here and I could have the use of a boat. Oh if you *could* only come over, what a glorious time we would have. We would explore the stream all up and down, and we would lounge under the trees and you should

read to me as you did after that strange dreadful time when I woke up from so long a dream. I often, often wonder what it all meant. I think I *must* have been insane, but no one will tell me anything about it. How bright the world seemed to me after that. How loving you all were ! And you, Taddy, how much you helped me to get on in my ignorance, and now I am becoming quite a clever little woman, so every one says. I shall never be so clever as you, but I can love as strongly and you are the one I love best in the world. There Taddy ! X ! that mark is a *kiss* for you. Tell dear Marian that a funny thing happened here in the autumn. She used to talk a great deal about her friend Lady Pilkington. Well one day, rather early in the morning, when I was out in the front garden, without a hat, for the day was warm, a sort of Indian summer day, looking for a late rose, and had just found one, a tall, straight, fine-looking gentleman with grey mustachios and hair, and a lady with such a proud handsome face, and hair, hair as white as silver ! got out of a carriage and came in at the garden gate.

I at first thought of running away, for I was not fit to be seen, but the lady fixed her eyes on me, and they shone so sweetly and so beautifully that I could not move. At that moment a thrill passed through me. It seemed as if I had seen her before, and a sudden pain seized me at the heart, which I could not understand. I must have looked bewildered, for the lady ran forward and before I could say anything she threw her arms round me and kissed me two or three times.

"Oh you dear, dear child !" she cried out, and her voice was very sweet and touching.

It was strange. I did not know her name : but somehow I felt so happy. She took out her handkerchief and put it to her eyes, and you know, though she was so grand and proud-looking I put up my hand without thinking and drew hers away.

"O Madam," I said, "pray don't weep so ! I must have known you when I was a child, for your face seems familiar to me—but perhaps—perhaps you have made a mistake."



L. 'The general stooped down with a grand air, and kissed my hand!'

Page 235, Vol. IV.

"Not a bit of it, dear!" she said quickly, drying her eyes. "I am Lady Pilkington—this is my husband, General Pilkington. Why we are old friends of your brother and your sister Marian!"

"Lady Pilkington!" I cried, bowing to the General, who came forward, and took my hand ever so affectionately and then stooped down with a grand air and kissed it—Wasn't it funny?—"I have often heard Marian talk of you and the General. How kind of you to call on us. I must present you to my mother. She is suffering. My father died about eight months ago."

"Yes! Yes, my dear, I know. What a pretty place you have here! Give me your arm."

She put her arm through mine and walked beside me, straight as a poplar. She has keen grey eyes and a sharp nose rather, but she seemed so kind and soft to me.

"Ah!" she said quickly to the General,—she speaks so rapidly and yet so clearly,—"Just as she was. Hardly looks a year older, and feel this arm. It's as firm as a rolling-pin."

She held out my arm, which you know is strong and round from rowing, and the General smiling and bowing, said,

"Forgive me, Madam, if I take so great a liberty, but I am very old, and I assure you a very sincere, friend."

So the old gentleman stood there with my arm in his hand and gave it a squeeze.

"A picture of health," he said nodding to Lady Pilkington.

I laughed.

"Would you like a row on the river, Madam?" I said. "I could row you and the General too: I don't think mamma would mind my going with *you*."

She laughed so clearly, showing her fine teeth and tossing back her head with its pretty white hair.

"You're a perfect love!" she said. "Present me to your mother. I fear we cannot stay long—but my motive in coming here is to ask you to come and visit me."

"Alas! Madam, I fear I cannot leave my mother."

"We'll see about that!" she said in her short way, shut-

ting her mouth firmly. You have no idea what a peremptory air she has, and her chin is ever so long.

So they came in and saw dear mamma, and spent an hour in talking, and were so kind and sympathetic with her. And then the General took me away to show him our little grounds, and when we came back, Lady Pilkington stood up, she looks right over my head, and put her hands on my shoulders and looked into my eyes. I wasn't a bit afraid of her, but they are so bright and keen!

"Your mamma has consented that you shall come some time next year and stay with us, my dear. We are friends, and we will treat you as our own child. I have no children of my own you know—glad to say—so that I have plenty of love to spare. Do you think you could endure a few weeks with the General and me?"

I laughed and kissed her hand, and then she put her two hands over my hair, and kissed me on the forehead. And so it was arranged that I am to go and stay with them at Gloucestershire, where they have an estate, and a river, and fishing, and boating and everything that is delightful.

What an immense letter this is—and there is the dinner bell, and I am not dressed! O Taddy may God bless you, and with loving Christmas greeting to all the dear ones at Queen's House, I am

Your ever affectionate Aunt,

BERTHA JOBSON.

*Queen's House,
Cornwall, Upper Canada,
July 3d, 18—.*

Dearest Auntie Bertie,

I was thinking only last night that it is more than three months since I wrote to you! I have been so very busy. It is my last year at school and I had to work very hard, for Masterman wanted to *master me*! and he is a very clever fellow and never forgets anything, and somehow though I am quicker than he is I cannot remember dates and things in history and mathematics so well. He beat me the first quarter and then I began to pull

up, and we had the examination last week and I beat him in French and English and Latin, but he beat me in Greek and we were equal in mathematics. But I was *dux* of the school and got the first prize, and who do you think had to give it to me? Why the "Governor." Do you know who that means? It means Doctor Arthur Jobson, *our member*! Dear old father—do you know, Aunt, his hand trembled when he handed me the big pile of books before all the people, and said :

"I thank you my son for this honour and I congratulate you with all my heart."

Then, you know what a kind soul he is, when Billy Masterman went up to get his books, the Governor said :

"Mr. Masterman the only regret I have in my son's good fortune is that he should, though I think it is by ever so little, have taken the prize over the head of so able and brave a rival. You are remarkably even, and I am as proud of you as of him."

And the Governor shook hands with him and we all set up a tremendous cheer when Masterman came down with his big armful of books. But I am very tired and I long so much for you to be here and go out with me boating and fishing. Mr. Roger goes sometimes, but not so often as he used. Do you know why? He is *married*! It is so funny. I cannot tell you all the story—but you know how that dirty Spriggs fights papa and hates him? Well when Masterman's father would not stand again for mayor Mr. Spriggs stood and was elected mayor, and Dr. Skirrow—*ugh*!—and Mr. Fletcher, councillors: and so the Spriggsites had it all their own way in the Town Council. Then what do you think they did? They got some letters written to the *Cornwall Speaker*—you know *our* paper is the *Patriot*, saying that the school was being mismanaged, that Mr. Roger used the *tawse* too much—he *does* give it to some fellows I tell you—and that he showed favouritism to me and others: fancy my name being in the papers. Then they ordered the School Committee of the Town Council to enquire, and they had already made Dr. Skirrow and Mr. Fletcher the Committee. They came down to the school and addressed the boys and Roger got very angry

and red in the face, and told Skirrow he was a liar, and Skirrow went away in a rage. Then Councillor Latouche and Doctor Troutbeck, and Mr. Roger, and father and others met in our dining room, and there was such a row, you never saw, and they all said Roger had been very foolish, and Doctor Troutbeck said privately to papa that he thought Doctor Strachan, up in Toronto, would prefer if Mr. Roger was a Churchman, and papa was ever so angry about it. I *did* like the Governor for sticking to his friend! Well but what do you think? When the Committee reported, Mr. Fletcher turned in favour of Roger! And as the Town Council was four Jobsonites against five Spriggsites you see that gave our side the majority. Everybody wondered what had come over Mr. Fletcher, and the Spriggsites cut Mr. Fletcher dead, and called him a turncoat and a sneak and a cat and everything nasty, and in the end it turned out that dear sly old Roger for some time past had been meeting Miss Amelia Fletcher, the tall dark girl I used to laugh at once but I like her now, at tea down at Mrs. Thomasson's house on the river bank below the canal, and had proposed to her, or else, as mamma says, she had proposed to him—anyhow they were married on the 16th of May, and they have a little house far back in Pitt Street, such an odd little place and no servant and Roger saws the wood himself. He does not come here so often now as he used, still mamma asks him and Mrs. Roger—ain't it funny?—"Mrs. Roger," and he seems so happy and gentle with her—while she sits and looks at him as if she could eat him, and I dare say she could. Ethel is growing tall and Tom is very strong and will be much bigger than me—I have taught him boxing and he hits hard I tell you. And O I forgot there is news that Mrs. Grenville has a son, and Mr. Spriggs's wife and child are both dead, and we have a letter from Uncle Hal saying he hopes he will be made a General some day and then he means to come and pay us a visit, and papa and mamma have been to Toronto to the session of parliament, and been to Sir Peregrine Muddlehead's at Government House, and I am to go to the new College there so that they will see me every year. There's lots more to tell dear

Aunty but no room. I love you always—how long it seems since you went away! God bless you.

Your loving Nephew,

TADDY JOBSON.

To Miss Bertha Jobson.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ROGER ON PARSONS.

THE day was warm. The sun played fiercely on the swift-running water, and the quivering moisture went up amid the glow ; the trees, filled with the fresh life of early Summer, gloried in the healthful heat and not a leaf showed sign of withering or death. Nature was all alive, the pure air was thronged with fluttering flies, the forest with chattering birds, the field and bush with buzzing chirruping insects, and the great river ran a living stream.

Out on the other side of the Cornwall island which faces the town, a boat was slowly creeping up against the current, close in shore, in the shade of bushes and sometimes of tall bending reeds and in the boat sat two persons, clothed each in the very simple costume of a linen shirt unironed and a pair of white duck trousers. Under the large coarse straw hat of the one who held the sculls, and was energetically propelling the skiff against the sturdy current, at about the rate of a foot a stroke, could be detected some strong hairs, grizzled here and there, a beard and whiskers growing grey, a bronzed face, but the blue eyes clear and steady as ever, of Master Roger. His shirt sleeves were rolled up and showed the massive arms damp with the dew of exercise. In the stern, sat Thaddæus Jobson, holding the strings of the tiller in either hand, and in his right turned over his forefinger a fish-line which ran out far down the current.

"How jolly this heat is !" said Jobson stretching his leg and looking from under his eyelids at the labouring Roger.

"Stay !" said Roger smiling, "take these sculls and pull me."

"Ah ! no" replied Taddy with a light laugh, "that would make all the difference."

"It is a question," said Roger "whether life is jollier after all to the labourer than it is to the lounge. Men are wont to sentimentalise about the health and beauty of work—its sublimity, etcetera, etcetera—a young man called Carlyle in England is beginning lately to write some very extraordinary and very striking rhapsodies about it, but on the whole the lounge has the best of it—the endowed lounge, the hereditary—money and land lounge. We, who struggle and labour have little compensation after all. The old story—*Sic vos non vobis*."

He pulled away.

"I think there is a pleasure in work," said Jobson. "When I am working, I am happiest. There is a sense all the time of duty done which is wonderfully soothing. Do you know I have become a greater tyrant to myself than ever you were to me?"

"Ay! All true good men are that. Out of that alone comes greatness, or even fair success. But be careful—don't lacerate and wear body and soul beyond the capability of doing God's work. Save yourself for that."

"Perhaps I am overdoing it. But I feel my mind too restless to let me lie quiet. I cannot sleep more than a few hours," said Taddy. "By the way, after midnight last night I took up Horace and turned that thirty-second ode into English verse—you remember the words—

Proscimur, age dic barbite carmen,

This is what I made of it,

I.

*Come now my lyre,
We're asked to sing,
If lounging ever in these groves before
I've sung aught to thy tuneful string
That may outlast a year—or more,
A Latin hymn inspire!*

II.

*The Lesbian's hand
First woke thy strain;
Who, rude in battle, yet amid the fight,
Or tethering to the wave-washed main
His battered ship, did oft delight
To sing in measures bland.*

III.

*The Muses fair,
The God of wine,
Or Cytherea, Cyprus' peerless queen,
And never-absent son divine,
Or Lycus, glorious with the sheen
Of raven eyes and hair.*

IV.

*O God-strung shell!
Apollo's pride,
Who ever welcome at the banquets art
Of awful Jove O come and aid,
Who dost sweet soothe to toil impart.
Him who entreats thee well!*

—Hoop!"

Taddy, who has been reciting his verses with an evident admiration of them, suddenly drops the tiller-lines and Roger listening but always on the look-out gently keeps the boat's head straight and holds her stationary in the current while Taddy tries to pull in hand over hand, slowly.

"Let him out, Taddy!" cries Roger, looking with experienced eye at the cord which is strained to the utmost.

Off goes the fish for a run, Taddy guiding the line clear of tangles as it runs out.

"He'll turn in a minute. It's a *maskinongé*—" Roger drops quietly down to ease the line a bit.

"Now then, sir—pull again!"

The oars ply. The fish which has slackened the line by a sudden turn and is now swimming towards them finds the cord tightened in a moment, and Taddy gradually works him up, hand over hand again.

Dash again! Away he goes.

"He's a perfect monster," says Taddy, excitedly, as he sucks one of his fingers which the swift-running cord has rather burned. "We shall never get him in."

"Yes you will," says Roger. "He's a poor mean-spirited creature, greedy as he is. He hasn't half the go of a good salmon. You may haul him up a bit now Taddy."

Taddy steadily hauls in the fish which has apparently given it up as a bad job and comes along quietly.

"By Jove, sir!" cries Taddy, looking into the water, "look there—Can you see?"

Ten feet off in the clear-flowing crystal with a shining spoon just at the end of his long sharp nose, with his sly eyes watching them, and his mouth opening and shutting and his fins lazily working, is visible a fish at least four feet long, with a dark back, and shining silvery sides, a noble object in the sunlight.

"*Steady now, boy!*" cried Roger, under his breath, "*don't move, sir. Look well after your line when he runs out. I am going to pull into the stream.*"

Quietly but promptly, the skiff glides out into deep water, Taddy playing the line softly, when suddenly out it goes running like a flash of lightning.

Master Roger's quick eye is ever on Taddy's finger, he lets the boat drift down the swiftly-running river following the fish, but never allowing a strain.

"Careful, Taddy—careful! He'll turn directly. Don't give him any way, man!"

"Pull, sir! Quick!"

Roger slips the sculls into the water the moment that he sees the line slacken, and it becomes taut again. He pulls.

Taddy hauls slowly. Both of them are bathed in perspiration. The sun flames. The water glistens. The air around them quivers with rising heat and evaporation.

Gradually the fish comes up. He is thoroughly tired. He is drawn close to the rudder. There he lies lazily plying his fins, and moving his great tail, his mouth opening and shutting wearily, an enormous animal—bigger than a baby.

Sharply, swiftly into the fish's side digs Roger's gaff. The slight skiff lurches and swings round: but the powerful arms of the schoolmaster have raised aloft a hundredweight of solid flesh—a magnificent *maskinonge*, and there the great fish lies whisking and writhing about, hitting Taddy's thin-clad legs some sharp blows with his powerful tail: but a prize won—a veritable monster of the St. Lawrence conquered.

"Hurrah!" says Master Jobson.

"What a beauty!" cries Roger knocking the animal a blow on the head—which finishes him as an animal and leaves him quiet food for cooking.

He pulls slowly in towards a knoll on the island, lying there clad with dry grassy verdure, under the shadow of the drooping birch trees, and the two land and throw their heated bodies down in the shelter.

Thaddæus Jobson had been at home from Toronto, with B.A. stamped permanently on his back or wherever else those initials ought to be impressed for some weeks. He was crammed full for the moment of various knowledge, not altogether digestible, and certainly not digested, and the truth was he did not know what he should ever do with it. Roger, much maturer, was much less adventûrous than he once had been mentally and physically—and therefore, perhaps, more wise. The activities of his younger intellect, which might in a larger sphere have led him on into bold and brilliant speculations, had mellowed down into a steady energy of thought which like his vast physical powers was always under control, and so, self-limited, he had ceased to kick like that renowned donkey Jeshurun over the traces. "Self-limited"—but he was not in chains.

"Isn't this delightful!" cried Thaddæus fanning his glowing face with his hat. "How often I wished to be back again with you—and now I feel as if old times had come again."

"'Old times,' my boy—to you?" said the other laughing and passing his hand through the mass of grizzled locks which the heat had dampened down over his forehead. "Time enough for you to talk of old times, forty years hence."

"Ah!" said Taddy. "Do you know, sir, I feel as if those four years in Toronto had been twenty? I knew so little when I went there—I have learned so much since."

"Frank, sir, frank! To tell me, David Roger, your whilome guide, philosopher and friend not so long ago by the way, that up to fourteen I had taught you nothing and that you had to go away to acquire twenty years of knowledge in four. Hang Principal Knowall, say I, if that be veracious!"

Taddy coloured and stammered out—

“O, I did not mean that. The four years have been such fast ones compared with the fourteen before.”

“Ay, but you would never have had the four without the fourteen. With thinking men development is geometric. If you are worth anything, the next year, by yourself, will carry further in proportion than the four at Toronto which you estimate so highly.”

“The *next* year!” said or rather sighed Jobson. “What is it to be? Do you know, Mr. Roger——”

“Stop! We are no longer master and scholar—but man and man. Call me ‘Roger,’ do you hear?”

Jobson’s ingenuous blush came, as he took his former master’s hand. He said nothing for the moment. His eyes dilated and he looked a little frightened, as if a new horror had dawned upon him.

“I am only a boy still.”

“Tut. I see some down on your cheek and you have a beard coming—coming, sir, on your intellect if not on your chin. Take your place Jobson and talk like a man.”

“I don’t feel like a man yet,” replied the youth. “I have plunged into work, read, studied, gained all the honours I could, picked up some knowledge, but I know really nothing well. All those problems I work out are mechanical. I can stand a pretty fair examination in metaphysics, but what do I really *know* about it? I can recite what Richter and Tennemann have said to be the principles of the ‘schools:’ but I own I don’t understand them. How I took the prize is a wonder to myself—I can only suppose it was because all the others were more stupid than I was—but I give you my word of honour, though I wrote a criticism on Condillac and Berkeley and answered the question, ‘Describe the main features of the philosophy of Kant and Fichte,’ it was as a mere parrot, and I don’t really understand either of them.”

Roger laughed.

“Thank God, sir! They did not understand themselves! Tobacco-smoking Germans, all the universe was tobacco-smoke charged with phantoms to them! Strong

meats for men. At least you have had the discipline. The day will come, it may be, when you will read their works with opened eyes. I know what it is painfully to toil at comprehending and then at last to get a revelation. At present you are only like the blind man who has learned by his fingers the feel of the characters and can chatter out the words, but does not apprehend their form or meaning. You can recite them, you say—well—be glad you can even do that.”

“But I don’t want to be a mere parrot. I am in despair,” cried Taddy. “I have sat up night after night—copied out whole pages of the ‘Critic of Pure Reason,’ learned them off by heart, racked my mind to understand them, and the more I struggled to catch the ideas the more airy they appeared, like phantoms which, when I tried to grasp them, my hands closed on air.”

“Good, sir! Good! Now do you know what lesson I deduce from that? Your time for philosophy has not yet come. It never has come to some men who nevertheless pretend to be ‘Philosophers.’ Don’t try to eat what you can’t digest. Yours is a practical mind. I see it in everything you do—all your arrangements even for play are made in a business-like manner. Good. You think about your work and the means of doing it. You may be a poet—I don’t think so—though you are an enthusiast—and enthusiasm is poetry put into practice; you may be a philosopher—I won’t venture to say, but you are first, man of business—*homme d’affaires*—lawyer perhaps, politician, organiser, worker, statistician, statist, God knows what. He has endowed you with a quick, active intellect—you must use it with tact—don’t waste it in seeking after that which comes so hardly. Philosophy will be easier to you at thirty than at twenty; for as you engage in life you will perforce recognise in life the bases of many philosophic principles. Once get your *fulcrum* and then you may move the universe if you please—or you may make it, or you may destroy it—you may become a Strauss or a Comte.”

“No,” replied Jobson. “I want to work in another and a simpler way.—I sometimes think I should like to be a clergyman.”

"*A what?*" cried Roger, suddenly sitting up—he had been lying on his back with his eyes into the clouds. He stared at Taddy with an expression almost of horror.

Then suddenly remembering himself he fell down flat on his back again with a thud that would have sent a shock through the spine of a circus clown.

"A clergyman—yes," said Taddy. "I feel as if my life had been saved for some good purpose, and there is surely none so good as that of trying to teach people how to live a godly, righteous and sober life. Is not that a noble duty?"

"Taddy, my boy," said Roger, after a long pause, "you have hit on a very sore spot." Jumping up again. "Do you know, sir, that I—your old master—David Roger—was once destined to be a—what you call a 'clergyman'—what I call a 'minister'—that is to say a minister or angel of God's truth to men?"

"You?"

"Yes I."

"And why did you give it up?"

"Because, Taddy, *imprimis*, I could not find any existing body of so-called Christians who agreed with me as to what God's truth actually was, and I was not ready to start off as a prophet on my own hook, you know, and form a sect of Rogerites—d'ye see? And *secundis*, if I had really been certified beyond all controversy as to what God's truth really was, I don't think I am the right sort of a chosen vessel for dispersing, distributing and sprinkling the same."

"Why, sir—Mr. Roger—Roger I mean—you could teach anything. What a splendid minister you would have made!"

Roger shook his head.

"Why do I teach geometry well? I believe in it. It's true beyond doubt. Why do I teach geography well? It's unquestionable and can be verified. Why do I teach Latin with all my heart? It's a language with precise and irremovable rules. But, my lad—you have talked of philosophy. That is hard enough. It is the organizing of intangibles: but if you wish to get to sea in a boat and never see land—to toss on waves and never know whether

you can trust your compass, you just launch out on what is called 'theology' and begin to tell human beings that you are able absolutely, positively, beyond all doubt or question, to assure them not only of their present latitude and longitude, where they are sailing to, what port they ought to make for, how they are to sail, but the secret, the motive, the *life* of the elements with which they have to deal and of the original force which is behind them all."

"Is all that involved in it?" cried Jobson with some doubt in his voice. "Mine was a very modest idea. I thought that I could do no better work than comforting poor people and trying to lead the bad to be good, and teaching all men to believe—in fact, an ordinary clergyman's work."

"Dean Troutbeck's—Read prayers every Sunday twice—Christmas day, Good Friday and some other unknown holy days ditto—Ascension day, Purification, *etc.*, *etc.*, once,—communion once a month, two sermons per week made by sitting down and reading Barrow, Jeremy Taylor or South an hour after dinner and jotting down the driblets which are caught in the seine of a very coarse mind for the benefit of your parishioners. Marrying, burying, christening, all like clockwork: dining with the best people and saying an unctuous grace over the 'good things' which he pretends to say GOD has provided in extra profusion for that precise company there assembled to gormandise and swill—Is that your ideal of a life, Taddy?"

Jobson was a little startled by his friend's irreverence. He rather liked Dr. Troutbeck, and this satirical epitome of the good Dean's life grated harshly on the young man's ear.

"It is hardly fair," he said stoutly, "to talk of the Dean in that way. I have a deep respect for him. I should have been a worse boy or man than I am but for his kind and holy exhortations."

"Right, Taddy. As a man speaking to a brother man Dr. Troutbeck is a Christian and a gentleman. His influence is good—he is manly and he is true. But don't you see I am gauging him as an Apostle—and there you must admit he comes down flop. Stay—look here, Taddy, I want to ask you a question? You speak of being

a clergyman—I have already hinted to you what a vast number of problems in life and after it you have to face before you can put your foot down and say—*Of this I am persuaded and I dare avouch it on my body for time and eternity.* But I ask you are you penetrated, possessed carried away by an enthusiasm of faith? Do you feel that Time is running away so swiftly and Eternity is looming up so nearly and the great world is rolling round with such terrific rapidity and such magnificent peril of dissolution, that you Thaddæus Jobson, named after an Apostle, feel called upon by a Divine and Awful Voice, *heard, felt*, thrilling through your every fibre, and commanding you on pain of hell-fire to go out and teach—

*‘To seek the wandering souls of men;
With tears, entreaties, cries, to save
And snatch them from the yawning grave.’*

Is that what possesses you? For it, will you take up and love poverty, sickness, reproach—death? If so, in God’s name I say Arise and do it!”

These words burst out of Roger in an impetuous current. His eye flashed, his voice rose.

Taddy was silent. Roger became more calm and went on solemnly.

“Because, Taddy,” he said, “unless you have such a call, don’t make one. I have been in a parson-factory—it is to me one of the most melancholy places I know of. To see young men come in there professedly to prepare themselves to take the place of the Apostles—perhaps, as in your church, in an avowed holy *apostolic-succession*—young men who have never bottomed for themselves their own natures still less the mysteries of life and nature beyond—who are moved by the counsel of their friends or their own crude inclinations, ay and even by the prospect of a soft, silken life, in a black coat when they ought to be wearing fustian, and of priestly dignity and social position and knocking about among women,—such a sight is and was to me, who sought the call earnestly, eagerly, and could not find it, so revolting, so horrible, so wicked, that it nearly drove me over to atheism; for I could not think that a system which had gone away so far from such men as Paul and Peter, men

who became great apostles through struggle and suffering, and had fallen after all into this sort of mere drill and regimen—was true. I say, Taddy Jobson, if you have the grand call to the apostleship take it—I believe it comes to men from God—but it comes to few—but if you have it not, do not go into that workshop of hypocrites and humbugs a parson-mill ! ”

Roger’s words and manner made Jobson ponder. He did not reply. Roger had fallen flat on his back again after delivering himself, and covering his face with his big hat left Taddy to digest his words. He thought a long time.

“I must talk to my mother about this,” at length said the youth.

“Ay ! do—” replied Roger from under the hat, “she is a sensible woman. But,” he added, rising and stretching his arms, “my stomach says it is nearly tea-time, and we have a long pull before us. Apostle or no apostle you must *feed*.”

*Nunc est bibendum—nunc pede libero
Pulsanda tellus.*

Now must we drink tea—now is it for us to make tracks for home with unshackled feet.”

The next day Roger went and saw Marian Jobson. He told her what he thought about Taddy.

“It is a *notion*,” he said, “not a *persuasion*. True he may say he would live and die for it—any obstinate man would say the same of his own will and wish. It is not a consuming fire—it does not eat him up as enthusiasm ate up Elijah and Paul. Without that, my dear Madam, what is a parson ? A hermaphrodite in a frock. This lad of yours has stuff in him. He can do something for the world. He has genius—and he is candid, and able. Shut him in a cloister—how far would his ideas run ? As far as the stone walls around him—no farther. Put him into any Church, Anglican, Methodist or what not—the walls are a little wider but they are also stone—and he’ll break his head against them, or become that most Satanic of all human beings—a clever priestly hypocrite. He is good—religious—earnest—try and show him how large a field there is for him in human life. Would you like

to see him frocked, with his hair smoothed down—and his eye furtive and his powerful intellect choked up with irreducible dogmas? True—he might become a Dean——!”

Marian Jobson laughed out loud. Roger was a sort of chartered libertine in conversation with her. She enjoyed his raciness though sometimes it tried her steady orthodoxy.

“Now—now—” she cried. “No jokes at my friend Doctor Troutbeck’s expense. I know what a dissenter you are—Jobson sometimes smells heterodoxy about you—sulphur and brimstone. But as for Taddy—I confess I think with you. It is not an inspiration he has, it is a sentiment. Well, we will send him to Latouche’s to read law for a year or two. If he really wants to be a clergyman he shall be. He is only a boy yet.”

“In one sense—but he is also a man—before his time.”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MARIAN JOBSON TO LADY PILKINGTON.

*Queen's House,
Cornwall, Upper Canada.
February 15th, 18—.*

MY dear Helen,
Jobson and I have just returned from Toronto, where there has been a very short session of the Legislature. You will have seen what difficulties we have had here. Jobson you know is by nature a Tory, and has no Republicanism in him, but he can't stand the outrageous abuses perpetrated under Sir Peregrine, a poor dear old stupid, and a very ambitious, worldly and intriguing ecclesiastic, Doctor Strachan, who virtually holds the reins of government, and distributes its favours—giving himself and his family the largest share. He is an executive Councillor, legislative Councillor, President of the College, Magistrate, rector of York, Member of the Land Council, President of the Provincial Board of Education, Receiver of the New Glebe Rents, Member of the Clergy Corporation, Director of the Province Bank—and to cap all an Archdeacon, and a Scotchman! With all our strong Church leanings we cannot endure to see this unprincipled adventurer riding it rough-shod over this fine country as he does, securing for himself its finest lands, and crushing out all efforts at life and improvement of the state of the people. Two persons, one named Mackenzie in Upper Canada and Papineau in Lower, not I fear very respectable characters, got their opportunity out of the present state of things in this country, arising largely, so Jobson says, out of the incapacity of the Colonial Ministers at home, and the folly of the Governors they send out to us. Jobson says we shall have a union with Lower Canada. It does not much

matter—the people there have not much brighter ideas than those here, and are religiously quite as great fanatics. Orangemen in Upper Canada, and Roman Catholic French and Irish in Lower Canada, with English and Scotch Protestants intermixed, how are we ever to settle down into a “conglomerate society”—as Jobson calls it? He is so odd. He has a theory the world will always right itself somehow, and this optimism of his often makes me angry—if I could be angry with so dear and good a man. (He is just as you knew him eighteen years ago only getting grey—but very handsome still.) However I won’t trouble you with our politics, an unsavoury subject enough. They are petty and miserable to a degree, and often make me heart-sick. I *do* think that if we had remained in Quebec, we should at least have escaped all this. You can have no idea of the *press* here. The people who go into it are low second-rate scribblers who know absolutely nothing but how to turn off coarse and commonplace personalities. Jobson laughs at my nervousness, but I hardly dare to open a paper. If it is a Government organ it publishes a statement that Jobson has made fifty thousand dollars by a canal contract through a corrupt bargain with Mr.——, a clerk in the Public Works Department; “full details to be given in our next.” *No* details are given in their next—they haven’t even the decency to apologise—there is not an atom of truth in the statement—the writer knows it—has had the statement concocted in the office of his paper. Could you conceive anything more disgraceful? Yet he is supposed to be a gentleman, has a dashing wife, moves in the “best society,” and is said to be distantly connected with some Irish nobleman. That’s *not much!* but it ought at least to exert some little restraint on him. He left the army and came out to Toronto a needy adventurer, and started the *Post* in the Government interest, as a novelty in Canadian journalism—indeed it would have been!—“a journal written by gentlemen for gentlemen!” Mr. Roger, our schoolmaster here, who says some sharp things sometimes, said when he saw this that “there were only two difficulties in Mr. Caddycut’s way, one was to find the gentlemen in Canada to write it and the other to find the

gentlemen to read it." Of course that is very sarcastic and severe, but not so far out of the way I can assure you. Well, this wretch started his paper, cut a great figure—his wife is rather a dashing woman—and in three months was on the eve of bankruptcy—he had really kept wonderfully within the mark, but Canadians did not care for unspected writing. So one day he came out with an article charging a prominent member of the opposition with some horrible offence. No one believed the charge, the man was quite innocent, but unfortunately there are few public men here who could stand cross-examination in the witness-box, so Mr. Caddy-cut trades on it. He is a disgrace to the uniform he once wore. Of course his circulation at once went up, our opposition papers retorted by accusing him of fraudulent bankruptcy in England, and so the fight goes on, with the most vulgar personalities written in a low style which makes one shudder.* Jobson, one of the few men whose character is above reproach, has been accused in the *Post* by *innuendo* of every sin in the Decalogue, and he is not a bit afraid of the witness-box, but these people are cunning. They are very cautious with *him*, and Councillor Latouche who keeps a sharp look-out has never yet been able to find a case which he would venture to lay before a jury. The juries are just like those mentioned in *Hudibras* who—

—gave their verdict
As if they felt the case not heard it.

Then they nag away so. Only imagine my feelings the other day in reading in a Montreal paper, called the *Vadette*, edited by an adventurer who has been successively ploughboy, grocer's clerk, printer's devil, barrister, and editor, and who wants to get into the local assembly, a letter from Toronto with this paragraph:

"Doctor Jobson, member for Stormont, is here with his pretentious wife. They are far too intimate at Government House, and it is much remarked in *ministerial circles*

* Sir Francis Head, in a despatch, in 1839 I think, to the Colonial Secretary thus speaks of the press of his pro-Consulate: "The press here is conducted by Editors who, on all sides, not only misrepresent but shamelessly falsify all public events. In Toronto this unprincipled mode of warfare is so well understood, that it produces but little evil, but the dissemination of falsehood through the remote districts of the province, as well as in Lower Canada, creates a moral contagion which it is almost impossible to resist."—ED.

here—"O my dear Helen fancy a "ministerial circle" in a colony like this!—"that Sir Peregrine should be so thick with a Republican (!). Doctor Jobson, I fancy, from what I hear, has private reasons of a financial character, for not feeling very happy just now, and I should not be surprised to hear that, within a few days, he has found it necessary to apply to a certain government official who deals in an article called 'Whitewash.' At all events his biliary organs are evidently not working as those of even a third-class *medico* like himself, ought to work, for his eyes are very heavy, and his complexion has become a sallow orange colour." This I assure you is a very moderate and decent specimen of the sort of thing which is published by editors on both sides, and you may imagine from this what the editors and what the readers must be! Our local politics is even lower. We have a most unfortunate feud going on here—it arose out of our poor dear friend E—— G—— you know—(he is getting on very well—has *two* children—has bought two thousand acres of land, and built a chapel and allows the clergyman to live in his house)—and has got on ever since he went away. It is too ridiculous. Half the people won't visit the other half. To us it is very trying. There are only few people our children can mix with—they are growing up now, and one becomes *most* anxious about them—I will say more about them directly—there are the Latouches for instance, with a silly son of twenty, and two girls; rather elegant, brought up in a convent at Montreal, and the Mastermans—a merchant here—and Judge Turnbull's, and the Dean's families. Well of course the judge cannot take sides prominently—though a great friend of Jobson—and having *three* girls grown up and two young men, there is a good deal of entertaining, and of course Taddy and Ethel go there. There they meet the children of Councillor Jewett, one of my husband's ablest and most inveterate opponents, and a wretch—a son of Doctor Skirrow's—who once *shot* at a boy here with a cannon and wounded him! The young people naturally cannot meet without speaking or dancing together, and so there are all sorts of difficulties. Taddy never will speak to Skirrow, who is a vulgar and pushing fellow, and Skirrow takes every

opportunity of talking to Ethel. I overheard Taddy the other day vowing that he would thrash him: and as Taddy is a very serious boy, and rather of a religious turn, I am really afraid he means what he says. What a society, my dear Helen, for my children to grow up in! I am sure Montreal and Quebec have much greater social advantages, which poor dear Jobson has wholly thrown away.

Your Godson has grown now nearly as tall as his father, a great strong fellow, but with a delicate look in his face, his fine brown hair curling over his forehead, nice teeth, a good well-shaped mouth, a fair complexion, long chin, reminding one rather of the von Stiffkin portrait in our dining-room, which Isabel sent me from Norfolk, clear blue and grey eyes, and his nose a little Roman like his father's, so that he is handsome. He rather takes after me in nature I think, is very sensitive and quick, but *positive*, almost to obstinacy—and I do dislike obstinate people. Not that he is obstreperous, exactly—but he has a knack of getting his own way, either by taking it with all its consequences, or quietly arguing you into giving way to him. Jobson says I am too much under his influence—but really Helen he is a fine youth, and fit to be your Godson. How I long to send him to see you! Do you know he wanted to become a clergyman? And then I *did* put my foot down. You joked about his becoming a Methodist minister because I would call him after my dear distinguished relative, and it really did come very near it, the boy was so overcome by the awfulness of that accident. The influence of it is upon him now, and he became almost morbidly religious. Indeed if we had been Roman Catholics I am *certain* he would have turned monk. However Providence saved us from *that*, and Taddy wished to become a clergyman. Fortunately his old Master here—a Mr. David Roger, not a *gentleman* you know, but really a most *able* and *sensible* and *charming* man, you don't know how I like him, was *shocked* at the idea of our Taddy—of whom everyone seems to expect great things—taking to the Church. He very sensibly said that if T. had a call to an “apostleship,” and *felt* it, he ought to follow it, but when I came to talk to T. about it, I found it was some idea of gratitude, and a sense of duty—which had

impressed him. I did not cross him in the least—for that is the last way to manage him—so I simply said that it was a very serious question, requiring consideration, and that before he entered upon so solemn a matter he ought to think well over it, and I advised him to spend a year or so in reading law, and said that, meantime, we would not interfere in any way with his free choice, so now he has been reading away for eight months and more with Councillor Latouche, and as I hear no more about the Church, and he is becoming more studious than ever, and writing poems and plays which are really very clever, I fancy that the idea has worn off. All my children are well and three of the boys are at school. It is so strange to be writing to you who have never seen any one of them except Taddy. Ethel is now over sixteen, a charming girl, with very light long hair, and blue eyes and such a delicate complexion! She is strong though she looks so fragile. The General's namesake William who comes next is a dark boy, not very tall, but strong, with thick stiff hair, and a great taste for mathematics. Mr. Roger predicts he will do very well at it, and wants us to send him to Cambridge. Then comes Eveline, also dark, in eyes and hair and complexion, and very intelligent—and then the two other boys, and our darling little Tiny, who makes the house quite bright. Is it not a household? Yet as they grow up around me my love for them increases and they are a daily comfort to me, with all their little whims, naughtinesses and ailments. Indeed if I were not very strict with them I don't know how they would turn out, for their dear father is so easy-going and so little with them that really they might as well almost have no father. However that only makes my care and responsibility the greater, and I try to meet it cheerfully, for it would be a fearful thing hereafter to think one had left anything undone for *such* children as these. We were so gratified to hear of Bertha's delightful visit to you. She is perfectly in love with you—and it is so strange, in all her letters she says nothing hinting in the slightest degree that she remembers the past, or had been able to do more than fancy she had known you before. It is a most mysterious and kindly

providence. Her new life is all unclouded and as fresh and *naïve* as if she were still a child, and yet she is so clever and develops really most surprisingly. Your account of her also interested us immensely, and it would gratify us indeed *if* Sir Winton Foljambe *were* to take a fancy for her. She ought not to marry a young man, and a baronet of forty-two would be just the thing for her. But I don't wish her to marry and my own belief is she *won't* marry, and that there still lurks in her mind an image she does not quite apprehend, but which will rest there for ever and never be replaced by another.

* * * * *

Your ever loving friend,

MARIAN JOBSON.

Lady Pilkington.

CHAPTER XXIX

AN OLD STORY.

MASTER TOM SKIRROW had returned to Cornwall. This fact was manifest upon the pavement of Pitt Street at any hour of the day, it was too frequently brought home to the inhabitants of Cornwall at unseasonable hours of the night.

The grounds for Tom Skirrow's return to his native air, at the age of twenty-one, and before he had taken his degree in medicine, were set forth in the following letter from Doctor Mactavish, the head of the faculty in Montreal, and one of Doctor Skirrow's own preceptors in medicine.

[*Confidential.*]

"MY DEAR DR. SKIRROW,

"I am sorry for my own sake and yours to be obliged, by peremptory request of the faculty of medicine, to address you concerning your son Mr. Thomas Skirrow. I have so deep a respect for the father, that I should have been most desirous to promote in every way in my power his son's progress and success, had it not unfortunately been the case that he uniformly interposes insurmountable obstacles to the operation of the kindness and goodwill of his father's many friends in this city. I repeat this with the greatest regret, because my colleagues and myself all feel that he has capabilities of no mean order which might be most usefully applied, but which at present are not utilised for the highest purposes. It was not many months since he was found drunk in the snow with the thermometer at 15° (Fahr.) below zero and conveyed to his lodgings in a half-frozen condition by one of the faculty. His dissipation is I regret to record flagrant and excessive, his attendance at all the classes, except in the dissecting room—for which he exhibits an extraordinary fancy—most perfunctory. Great excitement

has of late been caused in Montreal by numerous cases of body-lifting (with regard to which perhaps both you and I from old reminiscence of our student days might be able to contribute some curious information), and all those who can afford it now station persons with guns by the graves to guard the bodies of their deceased friends for a week or two after burial. Last week, however, a woman died in the hospital here of *pleuritic meningitis*—a disease which perhaps may be novel even to your considerable experience. It was a most interesting case, which attracted very great attention among medical men, and upon her death we were naturally extremely anxious to have an autopsy. Her husband however, who was an exceedingly rigid Catholic, yielding to the usual irrational prejudice, refused to allow the body of his wife to be utilised for scientific purposes. It was buried in the Roman Catholic cemetery. No guard unfortunately was established—and the next day it was found that the grave had been rifled. Your son and others brought into the dissecting-room the same night the remains of a woman which they alleged they had purchased, and these had been examined by one or two young doctors and the students—who to do them justice had performed the operation with some care and skill—obtaining some most valuable memoranda ; and before midday the remains had been so distributed as to be unrecognisable—all the ceremonies having been left by the perpetrators in the vicinity of the grave. Very great consternation and excitement and a most disagreeable feeling have been occasioned in the town by this incident, and it might have had the gravest consequences for several of the students, were it not fortunately the case that our Mayor this year, Doctor Bibson, is one of ourselves, and of course not inclined to facilitate the discovery and punishment of students of his profession who have at most been guilty of excessive zeal for science. It has come to my knowledge in a regrettable way that your son and another were the perpetrators of this bold affair ; for it appears the students gave a supper-party to celebrate the event, at which they partook very freely of the fresh whisky of the country and your son Mr. Thomas Skirrow so far exceeded his capacity for alcohol and fusil oil, that I

was suddenly called up in the night to see him at the lodging of a friend, where he lay in a state of *coma*, and really within a very short point of absolute inanition. I immediately applied the stomach-pump and took every means to promote restoration, and happily succeeded after a couple of hours in bringing him out of danger, but the escape was most narrow and I may say providential. Having addressed to him some kindly-meant remarks on the subject of his excesses, he retorted upon me with great rudeness. And although happily I believe now, owing to the precautions which were taken, there is no means of identifying the remains of the poor woman, which have become in a sense the pledges of science, it is possible that through some incautious student the matter might be exposed and it is highly desirable—apart from the fact that the faculty have resolved upon his expulsion on account of his general character and repeated breaches of order and discipline—that Mr. Skirrow should be removed from Montreal, and placed under your own immediate supervision.

“Believe me, my dear Sir,

“Yours very faithfully

“RONALD MACTAVISH.”

Thus Master Tom Skirrow was restored to the “own immediate supervision” of his worthy father. Unabashed, attired in a loud plaid suit of what was supposed in Montreal to be the fashionable cut, with high collars, a gaudy necktie and pin, a large chain of doubtful standard, a cane which he sucked with an air of well-feigned distraction, and, finest touch of all, with a single eye-glass screwed in his eye, Tom Skirrow now pervaded and promenaded the streets of Cornwall from morn to night until everyone was weary of seeing him. All its whisky bars knew him as a worshipper. His superior knowledge of the world and his doubtful abilities attracted to him a small knot of the younger and idler men of the town who joined in though they could not emulate his excesses. While Thaddæus Jobson, installed in a plain wooden chair, on an uncarpeted floor, at a deal table, read law in the office of Councillor Latouche,

Skirrow, occupying a similar deal chair, on a similar floor, before a similar table at Councillor Jewett's, also affected to be preparing himself to become an ornament to the bar of Canada. He was moreover infected with literary and political ambitions. In new countries these ambitions sprout and bloom like the weeds in a rank soil. One of his fellow-students in Montreal was the son of the editor of a journal which existed on the trumpery new and broad scandal that formed the staple of Canadian newspapers, and Skirrow had tried his hand and succeeded in producing paragraphs of the style desired by the printer's-devil who had risen to sit in the editorial chair without losing his earlier qualities or acquiring any new ones. When Skirrow had reinstated himself in Cornwall he began to act as purveyor to the *Montreal Vedette* of the petty news, social and political, of that small place, and it may be taken for granted that the frequent subject of these items of gossip, was Doctor Jobson and his public and private life, treated with all that agreeable disregard of accuracy and taste which distinguishes the colonial genius in Mr. Skirrow's line of art. In the political discussions at old Mr. Spriggs's bar Mr. Tom Skirrow took a loud and vehement part, at the municipal elections denounced the opposite party in speeches flavoured with personalities, and men were already beginning to think that at no distant day, Mr. Thomas Skirrow might become a good fighting lawyer, a member of the legislature or the editor of a provincial journal, three professions in which his unscrupulous impudence was sure to find its amplest opportunities.

There was one more line in which Mr. Thomas Skirrow's genius was credited by itself with an extraordinary capacity to shine. It was in the line which he denominated "the ladies." Among the fair sex he, an ugly picture of his father, and dressed as we have described him, posed as an Adonis and flirted as a Paris.

Small as was the extent of Cornwall society, there had grown up in it by this time a very charming little feminine circle. The Miss Latouches, if not handsome, were certainly far from ugly and were elegant and lively. They had been instructed at the only place where at that time a

tolerably good female education could be had in Canada—the convent in Montreal. They played, they sang, they danced to perfection, they spoke French with facility and a fair accent, they had some taste for intrigue and as a reaction from the severe discipline of the nunnery they flirted with spirit. Besides they had seen something of the world, had visited Toronto and New York and been “in society” there, and had returned with a somewhat dashing taste in dress and a remarkable freedom of manner. Indeed these young ladies, Miss Emily aged eighteen and Miss Serafina aged just sixteen and a half, knew a great deal more of the world and its ways than many young ladies out of their teens in more mature societies. Then there were the judge’s daughters—the Miss Turnbulls, who had been educated in Toronto, and represented a less advanced type of colonial polish; and the Misses Jewett, also convent girls, without the travel which had so developed their rivals, but with the advantage of real beauty. Miss Clorinda Fletcher, moreover, still remained a single maiden, vivacious and pleasant enough if her age were never allowed to come into discussion, and with whom, as perfectly safe, Mr. Thomas Skirrow flirted rather ostentatiously. The fair-haired Ethel Jobson, who had spent a couple of years at Montreal in a small private school, and had acquired much from her mother and from Roger, was, however, the *belle* by all odds in the estimation of the young men.

Taddy for some months had been hammering away at Blackstone’s Commentaries—annotating, epitomising, committing to memory, thinking law by day, and working at classics and general literature at night, with surprising steadiness. He was forced out by his mother now and then to a dance or a picnic, to the delight of the women-folk, for his liveliness and humour told well in young company, but he turned back again resolutely from the seductions of society, and worked—as all youths work who believe that God has something in the world for them to do, and at this time this was his most sincere belief. Across his steady path, however, suddenly came a disturbing flash.

One afternoon in September, towards five o’clock, as he was sitting a little weary, his pale cheek resting on his hand,

his eye wandering out carelessly through the open window of the office over the dusty road which was only a few feet off, with its pavement consisting of thick boards on short sleepers laid three-broad along the side of the road, there was a patter of little feet, a giggle, and two young ladies flouncing along under gay parasols, in French sandals and short skirts, and elegant hats with black lace mantillas coquettishly disposed over their white muslin frocks, turned and threw at Jobson a roguish glance out of their wicked dark eyes. He caught their look, blushed and started.

"I forgot!" he exclaimed; "they're going to Judge Turnbull's to tea. I promised to go and look after Ethel."

He ran to the window without ceremony, and nodded to the damsels. They were only a few yards off.

"Aren't you coming to Mrs. Turnbull's, Mr. Jobson?" said Miss Serafina, the younger of the two, stopping and arching her neck as she looked at him sidewise with slaughtering eyes.

"I think not, Miss Serafie," said Thaddæus. "I have a chapter to finish."

"Oh! *do*," cried Emily, stepping back a step or two, and bringing the battery of her bright eyes to bear full on Jobson, who, gazing at her earnestly, felt at that moment a curious sensation of which, however, he had not before been conscious. "You really look so pale and worn—you will kill yourself over that horrid Claxton or Baxton, or whatever you call him. Papa says you try to do too much; and your brain will quite wear out, you know."

Jobson smiled, glanced again at Emily, then at Serafina, and back to Emily again. She was certainly an elegant girl, and her hat became her very well.

"Well, you know," said Miss Emily, stamping one of her small feet with some impatience, "you must make up your mind *quick*. We are not going to wait on your lordship all day. Here is Mr. Skirrow coming. Perhaps he will take charge of us."

And precisely at that moment Mr. Thomas Skirrow, carefully got up, with his cane, his eyeglass, and his Irish swagger—a swagger *sui generis* when seen in perfection, and probably originating in the coat-tail practice of Donny-

brook.—Mr. Thomas Skirrow, I say, came round the corner from Water Street. Jobson caught sight of him, and his mind was made up.

“O I will go with you—but I must change my coat. Will you step into the office and sit down a moment?”

The damsels glanced at the approaching Skirrow and at the door of the office. It was a forbidden portal to the female part of Councillor Latouche’s establishment, and the Councillor was a terrible parent.

“Quick, girls,” cried our hero eagerly, as he saw his rival approaching nearer and nearer.

“But pa doesn’t allow us to go into the office.”

“O bother,” replied Jobson, with a surprising disregard of filial obedience and social propriety for a young gentleman of serious views. “Never mind—run in quick.”

Which the young ladies did forthwith, and the door was almost slammed in Tom Skirrow’s face. A scowl and a malignant smile passed over his features as he sauntered on with provoking slowness, every now and then casting back a look towards the door, behind which the trembling young ladies were standing in the passage, while Thaddæus Jobson, whose mother would have been horrified at this breach of all conventional proprieties, rapidly made his toilet in the inner office. Presently he came forth in the full glory of a cut-away coat and nankeen trousers, and after making his apologies with a great deal of blushing on the part of the young ladies as well as on his own, they emerged upon the street. On the corner of Second Street stood Mr. Tom Skirrow with the knob of his stick wholly engulfed in his large mouth. Upon seeing them he extricated it without getting lock-jaw, and now continued to saunter on in front of them.

“Shall we go on fast to catch up with Tom Skirrow?” asked Emily with naïveté, glancing cunningly at Jobson to see how he would take it.

“Yes, if you like,” replied her cavalier, brusquely, stopping short in the road; “and I will go back to my work.”

A glance from the young lady and a roguish smile, vanquished Master Jobson. He went along led by a silken thread.

Something had happened, he did not know what. He felt inclined to look very often in Emily's fine brown eyes, and walk as near to her as he could on the narrow pavement.

Serafina was obliged to pick her way alone in front of them. However, she overheard perfectly, and Jobson whose tongue was now unloosed, was emptying out all a youth's light freightage of poetry, and fun and satire—the latter just then at Mr. Tom Skirrow's expense. It was boyish and not worth reporting. The young ladies appeared to be charmed. Skirrow could hear their laughter, and felt that he was the butt of it. He hastened on to the Judge's, where already several young people had gathered in the grounds, and on the broad verandah. It was a pretty place, with a fine garden and some old shady trees. In these raw provincial towns the conventional restraints are not so severely regarded as in old societies, and at such informal parties as this tea at Mrs. Turnbull's followed by a little dancing, the young people were confided wholly to the care of the hostess, who, certainly in good-natured Mrs. Turnbull's case, was no dragon. She was a Rochester lady, "N.Y." which stands for New York.

"Why, dear," she used to say, with a strongish nasal intonation, "I believe young folks ought to *mix* freely, then they ain't so likely to make mistakes. You keep them apart and watch them too closely, and you force them to make eyes and faces at one another secretly, instead of talking out square, and they'll be as sly as cats, and meet in the dark. Why my people at Rochester looked so sharp after me, that the only chance I had with my first attachment was to crawl out of our attic window and talk to him with my slippers in the spout. I caught no harm except a lot of bad colds. We might just as well have met in the parlour and done our spooning before the fire; it never led to anything serious and never would—he was a tremendous fool, my dear, and I knew it, but I liked to have some fellow in attendance, you know—though I own it came pretty nigh making me the wife of a man that is now a western hoosier—and not a diamond at that."

Mrs. Jobson considered Mrs. Turnbull "rather vulgar," though she highly appreciated her good-nature—for she

had once crossed the road when Mrs. Jobson was ill and nursed her through an illness day and night, with skill as well as kindness—but was unconvinced by her friend's singular arguments, but she had every confidence in Ethel and Taddy, and let them feel it. Lady Pilkington, had she known it, would have been astonished at her friend's lapse from the conventional proprieties.

The first thing that struck Jobson's eyes at Judge Turnbull's as he was holding open the little wooden gate for his lively companions to enter was Master Tom Skirrow, with his stick in his mouth, walking off down the garden beside Miss Ethel Jobson, who had for some time awaited her brother's arrival in the parlour, and had now been confided to this escort, by her hostess. The colour rose to her brother's face. He hurried on with his young ladies and called to his sister with a manner and voice which were a little peremptory, to join them. She turned at the call, the Miss Latouches tripped forward, kisses were exchanged, Mr. Skirrow all the while gazing through his glass and sulkily sucking the knob of his cane, and Jobson haughtily glancing in the direction of the spot occupied by Skirrow's body as if there were nothing there to impede his view.

Skirrow was by far the cooler of the two. There was no flush on his cheek or even fire in his eye. He took off his hat and bowed to the young ladies with provoking self-possession.

"You have taken, I see, Miss Latouche, to studying law?" he said in his hard grating voice addressing Miss Emily with assumed gravity.

She blushed, and glanced quickly at Taddy, who, as quickly, with the flush still running over his face, remarked, to Emily, as if no other gentleman were present, that "he supposed the Miss Latouches were free to study what they pleased and do what they liked without subjecting themselves to impertinent observations."

"Miss Jobson," said Mr. Skirrow, coolly, "shall we continue our walk?"

There was a dead silence. Ethel looked nervously and rather awkwardly at Jobson—and he at her and the young

ladies who understood the scene perfectly well, at both. Emily, as the one best versed in the world's ways, chose the most bizarre, which also happened to be really the most ingenious way of ending the painful suspense. She took a step to Mr. Skirrow's side and said,

"Before we go down the garden we must say how d'ye do to Mrs. Turnbull. Take me in to her, Mr. Skirrow." And before Taddy could recover from his amazement, the only too ready Tom Skirrow marched off under his eyes and nose with Miss Emily Latouche a lady at the moment cavaliered—not a bad word—by him Mr. Thaddæus Jobson. A double inflammation broke out in his heart. The conduct of Miss Emily was perfectly scandalous and unbecoming, not to say personally wounding to him. Had he not in her behoof just thrown away some precious hours of study? And this was his reward. On the other hand was the intolerable insolence of Tom Skirrow, who had dared to intervene between the knight and his fair lady. It was a familiar story—Miss Emily had played a clever if a dangerous game. She was fishing for Master Taddy's heart with the line *jealousy*—a very uncertain one to rely on for finally landing your fish, though it may give you plenty of fun. It does very well for awhile with a young flounder—and in love matters Taddy at twenty was nothing else. He followed with Miss Serafina and his sister, but his eyes and ears were all for the two persons who went before.

And Miss Emily?

Miss Emily was a girl who had a profound love of flirtation. It was not with her merely a natural instinct, it was an artificial study and amusement. She had even developed it in the convent, where the best-looking father confessor, over forty years of age, was drawn to come and listen to her brilliant playing on the piano in the refectory, and to peer into her handsome eyes. They were certainly worth looking into, large, deep, lustrous, of a strange dark golden-brown—real glowing eyes at times, and at times as soft and clear as a well-spring in a dark valley. When Miss Emily unmasked her battery, though she could not be called a handsome girl, she could be very dangerous, and it was her

delight to affect to set as many men in love with her as she could. It is no high feminine talent, but it is a very common one, although it is in itself an evidence that the woman has no heart.

Emily had no sooner saluted the hostess, than she turned her back on Skirrow and her eyes fell on Taddy, whose face showed only too ingenuously traces of vexation. He affected not to notice her and devoted himself assiduously to Serafina. There was a flush of feeling within him which he had never known before. The quiet, holy climate of filial and fraternal affection, the sweet, sad devotion to Aunt Bertha, these all in a moment were rudely shaken as by thunder in the clear sky—

—*Namque Diespiter*
Igni corusco nubila dividens
Plerumque, per purum tonantes
Egit equos, volucremque currum :

The clear hemisphere of his soul was suddenly filled with storm and lightning.

Life had become in an hour a new thing for Jobson.

At the moment he took the usual refuge of weakness, he affected not to be hit. All his clever powers of fun, of raillery were brought to bear on Miss Serafina, who, plying her fan with a grace she had learned from a Cuban lady in New York, with recondite meanings in all the flutters of which Jobson was happily ignorant, looked maliciously at her sister, to whom Skirrow, with one side of his face screwed up all round his eyeglass, was paying elaborate attentions, which she now feigned to receive with distinguished pleasure.

Fortunately tea was announced by the ringing of a huge bell which summoned in the wanderers from the garden. Fourteen or fifteen young people were soon gathered in the room, and Jobson found himself sitting by Miss Emily. She had arranged it. Skirrow had no alternative but to take his seat beside Ethel Jobson, for which he received Jobson's most haughty glance.

Miss Latouche in an instant skilfully took up Jobson, and as it were stood him on his feet.

"Well, Mr. Jobson, you *did* give me a fright! I hope you will thank me for saving you and Tom Skirrow from coming to blows. Why do you keep up bad friends so long?"

"Excuse me Miss Latouche," said Jobson stiffly, "Skirrow's hostility to me commenced a long time ago, and I believe is as strong as ever. I pay no attention to it. I don't even know him you know. He seems to be very intimate with you. I was not aware that he was so much at home at Councillor Latouche's——"

"Stop, sir! You know very well he is never admitted inside our door."

"Will you have some bread and butter?"

"No thank you, I'll have a buckwheat cake. Tom Skirrow, will you help me to one of those?"

She looked round with a meaning and malicious smile straight in Jobson's eyes. He was helpless. He laughed in spite of himself. His mind and feelings were as quick and as sensitive as mercury, and the very devilry of this young girl attracted him out of his long dream of serious life.

"Why do you call that fellow 'Tom'?" he said in a confidential undertone, as he leaned over towards the fair girl's ear.

"What else could one call him?" said Miss Latouche. "Look at him, he's a perfect ogre—he looks like our man Mike—only more common. How could anyone call him Mister?"

This feebly ingenious reason, invented for the occasion, sent quite a thrill of delight through Jobson's soul. Two hours had seriously overbalanced Taddy's high moral position. He plunged into a lively conversation with his neighbour, a conversation kept up on her part with spirit. She felt sure she had made a hit this time, and she resolved "to have some fun out of it."

She succeeded.

If an author might—though happily he may not—moralise in a history of this kind, a long and ingenious essay might at this point be written upon the critical influence on certain distinguished lives of the character of

a first love. We do not use "love" there as a trope, but in its simple meaning of the sentiment, feeling, sensation, or whatever else may be called that strange phenomenon by human beings called "love," when awakened towards a stranger in blood and sex. The proposal to describe minutely the outbreak and process of this ancient and hackneyed disease might well evoke a howl from the best-tempered critics and most forgiving readers. Every young lady now-a-days though hardly out of the nursery, and certainly though not out of her teens, has already intimately and even profoundly fathomed, gauged and felt all the symptoms—in fancy—with the aid of that multitude of wizards and fairies who now provide three volumes of distraction to the public at the rate between them all of about a volume per hour throughout the year.

But this so often insignificant episode in most men's lives, was to our hero pregnant with consequences, not only on his future, but his character. So far it interests us : and no farther.

Thaddæus Jobson's love had flamed up, as a fire lit upon the altar of Vesta—in a temple unprofaned by levities—and where high, pure thoughts carefully cherished and strong and noble aspirations well entertained, kept the place sincere, and filled it to the exclusion of grosser ideas. And the love fell not into an unthinking heart or into a merely passionate nature. It entered and took possession of a soul ; intellect and heart felt together the fever of homage to its object. An intellectual man may "love," as people phrase it, even somewhat intensely, and the intellect be never engaged in his feelings ; it may be merely an affair of sense. This was not Jobson's case. His whole nature was suddenly enthralled and possessed.

The night upon which Emily Latouche, in a fit of coquettish conceit, had thrown the silken threads around him, he walked home in a dream. He had encircled her waist with his arm in a feverish waltz. Her long silky brown hair escaping from its coiffing, had blown and woven around his neck, her head had lain upon the waistcoat, beneath which throbbed his tumultuous heart. He had experienced all the tortures of jealousy and rage when Skirrow, seizing an

opportunity darted upon her, and led her forth to a good rollicking country-dance. Jobson had then reproached her with his eye, and she had feigned to be sorry and had squeezed his arm a little hard as he afterwards walked her up and down the cool broad verandah in the moonlight, her head daintily enveloped in a little white handkerchief tied under the chin. The intoxication was complete. Ethel was forced to walk home by way of Mr. Latouche's house, as Jobson, Mr. Latouche's pupil, did not deem it right to permit the young ladies to go home with a servant through the dangerous streets of Cornwall; especially as Skirrow was prowling about on the watch for a chance of escorting the precious convoy.

He had said good night at the door—he had pressed her little hand in his big one, and received a responsive squeeze. He rushed to his room, not to sleep, but to give play to his flaming thoughts. He began now to understand what Sir Philip Sydney and Sir Walter Raleigh, and Suckling and Herrick and all the poets of love meant in those exquisite raptures and fragrant poetic sighs of theirs, the form of of which he had so often admired and so carefully analysed, but the inner motive of which he had never been able to appreciate. It seems fustian enough even to us old men. But now when he took down the well-thumbed "Astrophel and Stella," and read, with a glowing eye and thrilling heart, the Eighth song, the words that seem so measured, so classically frigid to the ordinary reader, became full of fire and life and meaning to him.

*Stella, sovereign of my joy,
Fair triumpher of annoy;
Stella, star of heavenly fire,
Stella, loadstar of desire;*

*Stella, in whose shining eyes
Are the lights of Cupid's skies,
Whose beams when they once are darted,
Love herewith is straight imparted;*

*Stella, whose voice when it speaks,
Senses all asunder breaks,
Stella, whose voice when it singeth,
Angels to acquaintance bringeth;*

*Stella, in whose body is
Writ each character of bliss ;
Whose face all, all beauty passeth,
Save thy mind, which yet surpasseth.*

*Grant, O grant—but speech, alas !
Fails me—fearing on to pass.
Grant—O me, what am I saying
But, no fault there is in praying.*

* * * *

*This small wind, which so sweet is,
See how it the leaves doth kiss ;
Each tree in his best attiring,
Sense of love to love inspiring.*

*Love makes earth the water drink,
Love to earth makes water sink ;
And if dumb things be so witty,
Shall a heavenly face want pity ?*

And so on. The words that were once to him but fine and eloquent melody, now seemed to be written in letters of fire and charged with glowing feeling.

Ah ! poor Astrophel ! Thy Stella may be quite as hard to thee as this fine shadow of the poet's fancy, but not for so noble a reason.

* * * *

Nights of delicious dreaming, of delirious poetizing, days of feverish wandering, wasted hours, blessed surprises, glorious glimpses of immeasurable happiness, hopes, doubts, fears, disappointments and triumphs, all succeeding one another in a mad dance. It is too old a story—it is not worth the telling.

CHAPTER XXX.

“NESCIVS AURÆ FALLACIS!”

OF course Marian Jobson was not long in finding out what had happened to her son. If Taddy had not taken suddenly to a style of dress of an exceptionally elegant and careful character, or had not become singularly fond of the poor amusements which society in Cornwall afforded; had he not wasted whole days in skating and tobogganing—always with the two Latouche girls; his desertion of the weekly readings with Roger, his abstraction, the ceasing of his anxious talk about his studies, and the substitution of a light and florid gaiety for his former seriousness, all would have told their tale to the mother's quick senses. She was in a pother how to treat the case. In truth she did not like it—not seeing in Emily Latouche the charms to which Jobson's eyes had opened with so sudden a flash. Doctor Jobson was by no means in ecstasy when the matter was mooted to him. He thought the Latouche girls engaging enough but very young and very light, and his views for Taddy were of a wholly different description. However the two parents agreed not to interfere, and our young Jobson plunged on—it was his nature to go straight and hotly to his mark. He even declared himself in a confused manner to Miss Emily, who was delighted at her conquest, but too shrewd to be in a hurry to engage herself at so early a stage of the grand campaign of woman, so she retained Taddy as her cavalier, on the understanding that the serious part of the subject was temporarily postponed. Without any heart and already a little corrupted by some of her intercourse with the world, while she could not but admire Taddy's figure and face and abilities, there was a gravity about them all which rather oppressed her and ill consorted with her

light, clever and intriguing nature. When Jobson brought her—as he liked to do—his verses, turned with old-fashioned classical elegance, or some dry essay, or some striking book, she took them, and affected to be enraptured, only to throw them aside disdainfully when he was gone, and to exclaim to her sister, "What a fool he is for so clever a man." And indeed, it must be owned, a clever man of Taddy's sort, with an active mind and pen, must be an intolerable bore during courtship, to any ordinary girl.

Skirrow on the other hand, with all his ugliness and vulgarity attracted her. He had a little of the "devil" in him—as she put it—and was not a spoony—and Skirrow was quick enough soon to discover his advantage and to profit by it. Miss Latouche, "just for the fun of the thing," never intending any serious wickedness, but liking the excitement of running the risk of it, gave him secret *rendezvous*, and exchanged with him little *billets-doux*. It is singular that one can only express all these little delicate shades of meaning in the French tongue for it is not because the things expressed by them are only to be found in France. Thus affairs went on for months, Emily Latouche playing her part, such as it was, with consummate skill, to the disgust, be it said, of Miss Serafina, who was more sentimental, more fresh, more sincere than her sister—and who moreover had fallen deeply in love with Taddy.

June found our hero still sighing like a furnace. He had given to this love his whole being ; it lived in him, walked in him, breathed in all the operations of his mind. He poured out his soul in lyrics and in long beautifully written letters—letters in which he brought all his literary acquisition and all the force of his intellect into play, in order to give charm and golden value to the homage he was paying. In these letters, so intense, so concentrated, so crisp and so passionate, he formed a style he never lost, which was at once strong and delicate, which seemed to quiver with vigorous life and yet to be classic and refined. That was his form of homage, and this girl, really incapable of truly appreciating it, could yet and successfully feign to be enraptured by it. Weirdest power of ignorant women who so often enchain men of great intellects, this capability of

deceptive sympathy and acted appreciation, in matters of art and taste and intelligence!

One fair June morning, soft, balmy, inviting to langour and yet thrilling with life, a step sounded on Mr. Latouche's large verandah, and thereupon a little movement occurred inside the dropped Venetians which hid the large open space of the French windows of the morning-room. At the sound the Venetian was just pushed out a few inches, and a "little head running over with curls" came out, two bright dancing eyes looked at Taddy Jobson and a row of white pearly teeth and two coral lips, bid him welcome in a roguish smile.

Jobson's face which of late had grown very pale, flushed with pleasure, and it was hard for him to restrain the natural impulse to catch that provoking little head between his two hands, and take toll from those inviting lips. He was dressed in white duck linen, a straw hat crowning his curly head, and with the flush on his cheek and the light that played around his mouth, he looked very handsome as the quick-eyed and quick-witted maiden thought to herself.

"Good morning Mister Jobson——"

Taddy made a lunge at the head, which disappeared, and left him to catch hold of the Venetian. Raising it he entered the room, from the bright warmth outside, into the green, cool shade within the jalousies.

There Miss Emily, who had hastily resumed her seat, was to be seen sitting at a low table on which some work was disposed, dressed in a ravishing costume of white muslin, which showed off to perfection her lithe figure. Serafina, who always dressed like her sister, an amiable but awkward form of compliment, sat at another little table on the opposite side of the room. Mrs. Latouche was engaged in household affairs, so that Jobson's field was clear.

After some badinage on the formal address of the young lady, Mr. Thaddæus drew from his pocket a little sheet of notepaper.

"What! more verses?" cried Emily, glancing at him roguishly and repressing skilfully a bad yawn. "That last song, by the way, 'Love is but a little boy,' I liked. It would set to music."

"This is new," said Mr. Jobson. It is a translation——"

"From Beranger?"

"No! from an older and better man—Horace."

"Oh! I don't know anything about him—gods and goddesses, I suppose—Venuses, Bacchuses, Didos—nymphs and satyrs and all that! I know—a perfect heathen."

"A thorough man of the world!" cried Jobson, who speaking thus emphatically was himself so unworldly.

"Ah!" replied Miss Emily, bending over her work to avoid meeting Serafina's eye as she said it. "I don't care for men of the world. I value thought, earnestness, simplicity——"

"Blather!" said Serafina, making a very vulgar face at her sister, behind Jobson's back.

Jobson smiled and looked at Serafina. She was a little witch for mischief and always knocking the sentiment out of his conversations with Emily.

"Shall I read you the verses?" he inquired, nothing else occurring to him to say, in the awkward pause that ensued.

"Oh do! Is it an accurate translation?"

"I hope so," answered Jobson. Here and there I have had to paraphrase a little. It is an ode which is the *pons asinorum* of translators."

"Ah! is that why you have gone over it?"

"Yes," replied Taddy. "We will now go over it together. Hem!—"

Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa
etcetera: thus rendered by Thaddæus Jobson, Esquire,
Bachelor of Arts, Poet Laureate of Cornwall in Upper
Canada;

I.

What swain superb in youthful graces
With scented dew embalmed and shining,
Courts thee, fair maid, with fond embraces
On roses in some grot reclining.

II.

For whom so coy in plain adorning
Dost bind those tantalising tresses
Bright as the golden hues of morning?
Alas! fond youth, he little guesses.

III.

*O'er altered fates and pledges weeping,
How oft he'll view with artless wonder
The black squall o'er the calmness sweeping
The sunny heaven grow dark with thunder.*

IV.

*So bright to him the outlook seems
Who recks not of the fickle zephyr,
And sees nought but thy golden beams,
And deems the true and fast forever.*

V.

*Ah! fools the shining harbour seeking,
The hidden shoals they'll soon discover !
At Neptune's shrine those garments reeking,
Proclaim my toils and perils over.*

Having finished the reading Jobson with great gravity handed over to Miss Emily the careful chirograph, result of not less than ten or fifteen transcriptions.

"Milton translated that," he said, with somewhat of a grand air of compassion for Milton, "but, though elegant, the rendering is very bald and severe."

Miss Emily did not attend to this. She had been running her eye rapidly over the lines, and then she cast a sharp glance at Taddy, whose look was all too fondly fixed upon her.

"What a funny thing of you to bring me this, Taddy!" she said, with just a little tinge of doubt and hardness in her tone, which his sensitive ear caught in an instant.

"Why? In the original it is a very beautiful poem, and, as I have said before, exceedingly difficult to translate. Some of our greatest poets have tried it—and failed—and—and of course I thought," said Jobson with simplicity, "that you would like to see how *I* had succeeded."

"It is about a fickle woman," said Serafina striking in, "is it not?"

"Yes."

"Whom the poet throws over and abandons to the fools who are willing to be duped by her?"

"Exactly."

Emily looked rather angrily at Serafina.

"Would you write verses like that if you were duped by a woman?" inquired Serafina, enjoying her sister's annoyance.

"No," said Taddy. "I would write with a pen of heated iron in a flaming passion. Horace was too cool. He was a cynic. In truth, of course, he did not care for the lady."

"Could you not have selected a more pleasant ode to translate, Taddy?" inquired Miss Emily, a little flushed by Serafina's interference. "The subject is certainly not attractive or complimentary to ladies."

"True—mere cynicism, but then it is a *tour de force* to translate it well you know. Does it read smoothly?"

"Yes—I suppose I ought to congratulate you heartily on your success. It is very charming. But you don't think women are like that, do you?" putting her head on one side and making eyes at him.

Here Serafina got up and left the room.

"Oh no ! I don't care for the sentiment—indeed I think it is false," said Taddy, "But the form is perfection. However read it over more carefully another time ; we will talk about it. What shall we do this afternoon? I thought of a turn round Cornwall Island, up the other side, through the Gut and so home—it is a glorious day."

Emily shook her head.

"I am afraid I cannot come, though the run through the Gut is charming—it is so dangerous. I am going to make some calls with mamma this afternoon. So, Taddy, you must let me off—you will come in the evening won't you? We are not going out. Have you any more undisclosed treasures to bring me?"

The clouds that had gathered in Jobson's face dispersed at this last little stroke, and after much badinage, and lingering adieux, and many efforts to break away, at length he disappeared to try and pick up once more the dropped thread of Blackstone's argument. Blackstone had already taken an unconscionable time, and Latouche began to think that Jobson ought to be getting on with some such interesting works as "Fearne on Contingent Remainders," and "Stephen on Pleading."

At lunch time came in Roger to Queen's House. It was a Saturday. He was free. Finding that Taddy was disengaged he proposed to him, after a rest and a quiet pipe,

that they should in the afternoon walk up to *Milleroches*, generally pronounced thereabouts Millrush, where through a thousand rocks, raced and foamed the mighty river.

Of late Roger's mind had been considerably exercised about Thaddæus Jobson. Rumour was not long in bringing to his ears, through the medium of Amelia Roger, the state of things between Taddy and Emily Latouche. The young man's devotion, the girl's vanity and levity, were indeed discussed with great freedom between Roger and his wife, who at the convent had known Emily Latouche, a much younger girl than Amelia Fletcher, and had been intimate with her in Cornwall. Amelia Roger's opinion of Emily disturbed the schoolmaster very much. He did not fairly appreciate all that his wife conveyed or hinted at—his mind was a large babyish one in matters of love and folly—but he understood enough to feel a fear lest Taddy should have fallen into intriguing hands and become the victim of a worthless flirt. The memory of all his own passion for Cicely rushed into his heart again when he saw Taddy's devotion to Emily Latouche, but even now Roger thought Cicely was a far worthier object than the one on which Taddy's desires were fixed. To Mrs. Jobson the schoolmaster threw out no hint that the subject was occupying his thoughts. He felt that he had no right to intrude on the confidences of Doctor and Mrs. Jobson, and when he remarked on Taddy's absence from their readings, the matter was so lightly dismissed by the mother, that Roger felt the avenue to be shut.

The afternoon was lovely as the two friends quietly strode up the road. Not a fleck in the arch blue sky, a slight zephyr just flickering the fresh-looking leaves of the trees, and the long, drooping flags of the young maize. The two were conscious of a change in their relations. They had lately seen little of each other. There was a slight constraint between them. Roger however asked Taddy no questions, simply leading the talk to general topics, especially the coming election, in which young Jobson was beginning to take an interest. By the time they had reached the rapids and listened to the music of their roar, and lounged awhile, watching the wondrous play of light and

motion, the restraint had worn off. Jobson became confidential.

"You know, Roger, that my views have altered about a clergyman's life?"

"I have not recently had many of your confidences, Jobson, as you know. You have been perhaps consulting another oracle—a pythoness?"

Jobson blushed.

"Oh I suppose you know or have heard that I have been paying attention in a certain direction. There is no harm in that——"

"Not a bit in itself," interrupted Roger gravely.

"I don't quite see what you mean by 'in itself,'" said Taddy, glancing a little angrily at Roger.

"Well, Jobson what I mean is that there can possibly be no better thing in itself than a young man's fresh and early love, provided it is true and pure and fixed upon a worthy object."

"Well," said Taddy "I know mine is true and pure, and I am sure the object is worthy."

"Humph!" said Roger.

Taddy was annoyed.

"The Latouches are superior people and very respectably connected."

"Hang respectable connections."

"All very well for you to say that Roger—but——"

"*But* to say it to Taddy Jobson, whose father and mother come of very good stock, is a gross impertinence," said Roger.

"No," replied Taddy looking straight into Roger's eyes. "I would never say a word to hurt your feelings."

"And do you think that would hurt my feelings, Jobson?" asked Roger with a calm smile on his face. "Respectable connections are very good things, and I should value them if I had them in the sense you mean. They are part of a man's fortune, advantages, prospects—and to be valued, like education, money or land. But they hardly come seriously into view in the affair we are talking of—and I know, my dear Jobson, you rather mentioned them in a conventional sort of way. Your real regard for Miss Latouche is scarcely

affected by that consideration, I give you credit for that, my dear boy."

"O! you are quite right there!" said Jobson with some enthusiasm, "she is worthy of the love of an intelligent man. Many people, I believe, do her injustice in that respect. You have to know her intimately to find out that she has a very intelligent mind and even a considerable appreciation of fine thinking."

"Humph!" said Roger again.

"For example, I took her this morning a translation of the fifth ode——"

"Ah! curious topic to select for an *innamorata*, Jobson. Did you translate

*Qui semper vacuum, semper amabilem
Sperat, nescius auræ
Fallacis!——*

Eh?"

"Yes of course—and I think she rather liked it as a clever piece of cynicism. Women, I think, appreciate cynicism more keenly even than men."

"Keep down here along the bank, it will take us through Mr. Pettifer's maples. Ah! she is literary?"

"Well, I don't mean that exactly—but she is appreciative."

"Good—first need in a good woman—to appreciate *you*, that you may not waste yourself in an idle quest," said Roger, a shadow crossing his face.

They had been quietly skirting the river bank. Between them and the west of Cornwall Island the sun-lit river glanced, a broad field of glory. They had jumped the fence and taken a few steps up the bank into the shade of the green maples with their clean stems and bright beautiful leaves. Suddenly Taddy Jobson caught hold of a tree, and leaned against it. He had changed colour, his eyes were fixed eagerly on something before them. He was trembling. Roger's quick eye followed the young man's gaze. Fifty yards further on, standing under the shadow of the maples, unconscious that other eyes were upon them, were Emily Latouche and Tom Skirrow. His arm was round her waist—her head was resting on his shoulder.

Jobson staggered and clung to the tree. The anguish in his face rent Roger's heart. Then he saw a quick change come over the young man's features. They flushed with anger. He left the tree, he had taken one step, when the schoolmaster's powerful arm was slipped through his, and in a low eager but peremptory whisper, he said to his friend:

"No, Jobson—be a man—restrain yourself; for God's sake don't repeat *my* folly. Come away, you have no right to interrupt a scene like that—" and he dragged him, swiftly, by main force, down the bank.

Taddy suffered himself to be led away. He was suffering visibly. His face was ghastly pale, the drops of anguish ran down his face, his teeth chattered in his head. Roger hurried him on for some distance and then made him sit down. He ran for some water. The schoolmaster's pain was as keen as that of his old pupil. He knew not what to say. Jobson would not speak. He sat with his head in his hands. Roger left him to himself, and paced up and down; tears were in the strong man's eyes.

"O youth! youth!" he said to himself with a groan. "What would I not have done to spare him this—poor boy! But he will be the better for it."

With great difficulty Roger managed to get his friend home in the evening unobserved by curious or malicious eyes. That night Doctor Jobson and Marian and Roger were watching by the bedside of Taddy, down in a raging fever.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE CYNICISM OF DISAPPOINTMENT.

I.

Is life worth living?
No!

'Tis but a fever-dream,
 Where phantoms flutter to and fro,
 Things are not—only seem :
 In trust and truth is no believing,
 And love and hope are but deceiving.
 'Tis even so!

II.

Is life worth living?
No!

'Tis but a holiday sail :
 Where Pleasure, Youth and Folly go
 Abroad, and tempt the gale,
 In sea and sky too far believing,
 For sun and calm are both deceiving.
 'Tis even so!

III.

Is life worth living?
No!

'Tis but an idle chatter
 Of things that children ape to know ;
 Where actors mime and flatter,
 Where wisdom is but deep deceiving,
 And faith but ignorance believing.
 'Tis even so!

IV.

Is death worth dying?
Yes!

'Tis rest in velvet gloom,
 Where all's wrapped up in stateliness,
 Within a sealed room.
 In death is neither love nor lying,
 And one joy is assured by dying—
 Forgetfulness!

THADDÆUS JOBSON.

Cornwall, Upper Canada.
 December 25th, 18—

CHAPTER XXXII.

IN THE TEMPLE.

IN a set of chambers, in Elm Court, Temple, up an old oak staircase, its battered balustrade all black with age and dirt, its dingy walls above potted all over with holes, and delves and dints in the ancient solid plaster, its oaken panelling and dado, which porters had notched with trunks, and laundresses with pails and coal-scuttles for so many centuries; which painters had so often daubed that the thick coat lay on like a piece of oilcloth, and the edges of the carvings had grown round and uneven; a staircase the stairs of which were worn into troughs by feet of generations; feet of young ambitious barristers lightly leaping up to attic stories; steady-going gouty feet of middle-aged practitioners, Queen's Counsel, Serjeants-at-Law, Special Pleaders, who had mounted and descended those steps year after year, weighted with heavy law till the summons had come to the Attorney-Generalship or the Bench, or the Woolsack, and they had gone to Serjeants' Inn, that Hospital for Legal Incurables, or else the old apparition Death had called them "to another place;" feet of shrewd attorneys and attorneys' clerks, brief-bearing, carrying with them in their baize bags manifold and wicked secrets and fortunes various, and holding in their hands also to no small extent the fates of those busy, hard-brained men whose names now crowd one another on the panel at the door—names set up to-day and gone to-morrow, names some day perhaps to become famous in Literature, or Statesmanship, or Law, or in Art—for even She finds her votaries in these dingy places; feet of sharp-tongued, slatternly drudges called "laundresses," who have patiently and sometimes impatiently toiled up and down those stairs doing the housewife for the celibates

whose oaken doors, ironbound and strong, set their faces against the enquirer, and remind him that here at least a man may be, and yet be not, "at home" to idle intruders ; in a set of chambers, we say, up such a staircase, in the dingy court of Elm—where elm tree flourished heaven knows when ! at storey three on the left, three persons were sitting in a small, but comfortably furnished room. The ceiling was low, and it was divided in Tudor style by dark oaken mouldings, with bosses at the joinings. These were relieved by small bright shields bearing the arms of the tenant's friends, whose names on little gilt and blue scrolls were attached to the adjacent moulding. On the floor lay a rich, soft Turkey carpet, round the room stood handsome closed book-cases well filled with finely-bound books ; in the corners stood casts of the Venus of Milo, of the *discobolus*, a bust of Homer on a pedestal, and lastly a bust of a man then setting some of the youth of England, among them young Jobson, in a blaze—Bentham. The door within was covered with crimson baize, set off with brass-headed nails. A bright-coloured window hid the dark bricks of the court from the eye and distributed through the room a mellow light. The other windows faced on the lane, affording a glimpse of Lamb's fountain. Vandal Benchers had not yet "improved" it, and its ancient, mossy quaintness was then one of the charms of the Temple where at length the modern Goth has marched in with clever "restorers" and substituted raw affectation for that old and matured sense of beauty and mellow picturesque, which once attracted the connoisseur. On a trellis round the windows grew a small-leaved ivy, and, in boxes, flowers were disposed, no doubt tended with careful hands by the lady who, sitting in the corner by the fireplace, her rippling hair shaken out in long brown curls, shading her face from the fire with a stiff silk-embroidered fan, framed in ebony, lay back and conversed with two gentlemen who sat, one in front of the glowing fire, baking himself with visible enjoyment, and the other on the other side of the mantel, protected by a small standing screen.

The one who revelled in the tropical warmth was a tall, dis-

tinguished-looking, though by no means handsome man, with features bronzed by air and sunshine, a grizzly head of hair, fine grey eyes, and grey mustachios of an extravagant size and somewhat fierce aspect. He had a considerable nose rather of the Roman order, though irregular in its outline, and a slight scar decorated one cheek, a mark however which did not spoil the general expression of manly firmness which anyone who looked a moment could detect, under the severe mask of the brown face. This gentleman appeared to be about sixty years of age. As he sat in his chair, his powerful chest and frame, and the long legs stretched out towards the fire showed him not less than six feet in height. His voice when he spoke was deep and mellow.

"Yes," he said, "I left them all doing wonderfully well. Bertha, you wouldn't know Arthur. His hair is quite grey—but he is very vigorous. He made a splendid speech on union between those two pestilent provinces Upper and Lower Canada, a speech of which my old friend Cowburn, the Governor, spoke to me very favourably, although Arthur is on the other side. They are in a great mess out there—some confounded thing called a 'family compact'—of course there's a parson and a woman in the affair—Taddy here I daresay understands all about it——"

"Oh! yes," said Thaddæus Jobson, with animation. "I'll tell you all about it——"

"Indeed you won't, sir!" interrupted the old gentleman, no other than General Sir Harry Jobson, K.C.B., who had just returned from visiting at a much later date than he had hoped, his brother in Canada. "I heard too much of the—the confounded thing in Canada, sir, and I am not going to be worried by it here. You green young lawyers will wag your tongues on any subject at any moment,—'Never say a word for less than a guinea,' was old Bob Maniston's maxim at Madras and a golden rule for a barrister too."

Jobson smiled.

"Thank you, Uncle Harry, I will enter that in my book of legal maxims. How is Ethel getting on?"

"Ethel, sir, is a little angel—blue eyes, yellow hair, quick and sensitive, and, what is more rare, for a woman—sensible.

"And Mr. Roger?"

"The big grizzly schoolmaster? The only *man* I met in Canada, sir, except my brother. A bold, brave fellow, who ought to have been a soldier, but got scratched with dissenting theology or something of that sort, so Marian told me, but thoroughly honest and a keen admirer of yours. Reads everything you write—which is more than I would undertake to do—and predicts all sorts of honours for you."

Jobson's colour and expression showed how deeply this pleased him.

"Now, sir, the question is," said the General, "whether you are really going to come up to the high opinions which your friends I find one and all—most absurdly I think—have formed of you? What do you say, Bertha?"

"I?" said Miss Jobson, laughing and showing her fine white teeth. "My opinion is worth very little, but I shall be deeply disappointed if Taddy does not make a brilliant success."

"Humph! women are always sanguine about young men. Well, we shall see, sir! Your brains are too active I think. I should never have been worth anything if my brains had worked like yours. I don't like this magazine-writing, reviewing, pamphleteering, and all that sort of thing. A very shrewd fellow came home on the packet with me. He said: 'A lawyer should stick to law—he has no business in literature or politics. Literary lawyers want force, and political lawyers don't attend to business.' By the way a rather clever fellow, though he talks with an infernal Irish-Yankee accent—married to a very agreeable person, lively and quick,—said he had been acquainted with you in Cornwall, but he had been practising in New York for three years—name was Skirrow."

Jobson turned pale and red by turns and Bertha started and looked anxiously towards him. He suppressed his emotion, and said

"Skirrow! what is he doing over here, sir?"

"Oh! I think he is come like you sir, to get something to do. His wife doesn't like America, and I fancy wants to live in England—her name is Emily something—I think

she came from your place by the way—Cornwall—you may have known her.”

The old General rattled on, not noticing what anguish he was inflicting on Jobson, whose forehead became damp and clammy. He thought he had forgotten it all, cleared it out of his heart and life, dismissed the two worthless ones in cool contempt from even the courtesy of a thought or a feeling, but the news that Skirrow was married to Emily Latouche, and that possibly before long they might once more cross his way, here, in his new scene of life, suddenly recalled to him, how much he had locked within him of sad memory and strong regret. It was only by a powerful struggle that he kept calm. However he was a man now.

“I know who they are, sir,” he said carelessly. “But they are no friends of mine I can assure you, and I don’t think Mr. Skirrow had any right to offer you any opinion about me.”

“Well—no doubt he is an impertinent fellow—but there is some truth, you know, in what he said. Law before letters—eh? And you are putting it the other way. When are you to be called?”

“In November,” replied Jobson. “After four years of dining in hall, I think I am ready for anything.”

“Well—the day you are called, sir, I shall give you a thousand pounds——”

Bertha jumped up and so did Jobson and each seized the old General by a hand.

“Now—no nonsense you two—I hate thanks—sit down again. Well—yes, you may kiss me, Bertha, once.”

“How good of you, Hal! Now what will you do with it, Taddy?” said Bertha.

“Stand for Parliament,” replied our hero.

“What!” cried the old man. “Then I revoke. I am not going to encourage any such vagary. What does it mean? At your age—just on the threshold of your profession? Why you would make a fool of me and my money!”

“Very well, Uncle Harry, I don’t want the thousand. If you give it to me, let me do what I like with it. Do

you know, Uncle Harry, it would place me in a very strong position?"

"No, sir, I am in a sense responsible for you—your father has placed you in my hands—a precious responsibility too! I am not going to give you the means of proving yourself a madman. Once in Parliament, you'll never see a brief. Solicitors I believe are shy of political and literary lawyers. I should not at all wonder in the present state of things in this country if you got in with those idiotic, radical views of yours. I'm told you are for a more democratic franchise than the Reform Bill, worse than Lord Durham, who ought to be hung for deserting his caste as he does, but then his peerage is a very new creation; and I don't doubt you would let Jews into Parliament, and heaven knows what not besides—Hindoos perhaps and Pariahs! Now, sir, I am a Tory and not a farthing of my money shall go to help a Whig into Parliament. Your father is bitten with some of the same pestilent notions. Many a fight we had over it."

"Oh! but you will give him the thousand pounds!" cried Bertha.

"No—not a farthing, unless he agrees to abandon that idea. Why I am astonished that you, Bertha, at your age too, should back him up in such folly."

Bertha laughed and blushed deliciously at this stroke and so did Taddy. Her age! Why she was a young immortal!

"It was Lord Swallowtail that put him up to it," replied Bertha.

"Lord Swallowtail? The Under Secretary for the Colonies? Do you know him?"

"Yes—he comes here sometimes," said Bertha, with a little flush on her cheek, for the old gentleman was regarding her very sharply. "He says they want a young man like Taddy in the House, who can write and speak, and he offered to find him a borough, but of course he could not stand without the money."

"No, thank heaven—and he shan't have it that's more. Lord Swallowtail, eh? Knew his uncle, Alfred Leeson, in India, in the 9th Bengal, they're all reformers to the back-

bone, but he is a brave fellow. How came you to know him, Taddy?"

"He happened to be eating his dinners for the bar when I first came here, and we used to meet occasionally, and I suppose he took a fancy to me." Here Jobson glanced almost imperceptibly at his aunt. "For two years he has been quite at home here, and we see a good deal of him. You know he has only recently been taken into the Reform Ministry."

"He is not thirty yet, is he?" said the General looking again at Bertha, who lay back in the chair, a picture of youth and beauty.

"No—but very nearly—and a rising man in the party, everyone says. I often help him in speeches on Colonial questions,"

"Humph! Well, he can't be after you Bertha, you're old enough to be his mother," said the General with frank brutality. "It's a case of friendship I suppose. Well, if you must go with those—hem! hem!—Whigs—why cultivate him Taddy. It is a very influential quarter."

"Well," said Bertha who had smiled at the General's rudeness, rising and crossing over to her brother, and smoothing the strong hair upon his temple, "You will let Taddy have the thousand pounds, but he is not to use it for electioneering purposes—that is agreed, is it not?"

"Very well, agreed!—Why bless my soul," cried the General rising, "it's half-past six, and Rothery of the Dragoons is to dine with me at seven at the United Service. I must be off.—Yes, yes, you shall have the thousand pounds, sir, and when you have shown what you can do at the bar, we will talk about Parliament. But don't rely on me remember! This Kingdom is going to rack and ruin with reformers and revolutionists, and I'm not going to help it on out of my hard-earned rupees. God bless you my dears!"

When the General had gone, and she had lit the lamp and drawn the curtains, while Jobson sat musing by the fire, Bertha went to him, and resting her hands on his strong shoulder, in a favourite attitude, because it enabled her to talk close to his ear, under the hyperion curls, in her sweet low voice, she said :

"You must not think anything about them, Taddy. It is all over. The past is buried—thank God."

"Yes—yes—the past is—thank God—as you say—but not the future. I was startled at first by the news—is it not very surprising, though, how Latouche, who is a proud sort of fellow, and Mrs. Latouche, who is a lady, could ever have consented to give their daughter to such a thorough ruffian—"

"O don't use such hard words. He may not be as bad as you think him."

"He is worse. Fancy his taking advantage of being a few weeks with Uncle Hal to slip such notions into his mind. He of course has no opinion on the subject. It was all pure conceit and affectation. I daresay he has managed to pump the guileless old gentleman, and knows a good deal more of our affairs than I should like him to know."

"Well—Taddy, an honest man is surrounded with an impenetrable wall. That miserable creature can do you no harm, and the best thing for you to do is to dismiss him from your thoughts."

Gladly would Jobson have followed his aunt's advice, but his will was not equal to the task. He had and retained, an uneasy presentiment that this arrival of Skirrow and Emily in London was no good omen to his peace or his happiness.

He answered himself repeatedly with the old, divine maxim—"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"—but he was now a deep and shrewd enough thinker to reply to himself—

"Ay, but how often when the evil comes the day is not sufficient for it !"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VIS MAJOR CONTRA VIRES MINORES.

JOBSON'S face and aspect had matured very much since the time of his arrival in England, not many months after the crisis of his first passion. Only four persons, his father and mother and Mr. and Mrs. Roger, knew of the cause of this illness. Even Emily Latouche was only able to guess at it. Thaddæus Jobson kept out of her way until he left Cornwall. The illness had cleared his mind of a host of sentiments, ideas, theories, fancies, passions, which of late had begun like noxious weeds to crowd out healthier growths, and it left him, if with less faith in human nature in one sense, with more in another. He turned again warmly to the family affections. Relieved of one delusion at least, his nature requiring always some large outlet, found it in the ambition which from a boy had pre-occupied his soul—which had inspired his work and self-sacrifice. *To be something—to do something great*—how this divine spark is kindled in young souls, how it is fostered, how it is blown up into a potent and all-consuming flame, is no curious question. It does come thus to a few, sometimes almost with the earliest thoughts, and with the growing years burns with a supernatural heat.

Transferred suddenly out of the narrow, half-formed and yet comparatively well-to-do society in which he had passed his early years, into the ancient, vast, complicated, half-decaying, half-developing system of British life, he found himself at once in a country the richest and the most adventurous in the world, surrounded by millions of ragged and half-starving persons. The ideas that were expressed by the people whom he met in ordinary society the coolness and comparative indifference with which they discussed the frightful state of things amid which they lived, startled and revolted him. These people all most agreeable, most

proper and Christian characters—such as Lord Cainham and his brother—the Newport Indian and other magnates, by whom he had been cordially enough received as the grandson of old Doctor Jobson,—the country society at Sir William and Lady Pilkington's, at Dixley, in Gloucestershire,—all seemed to regard things that made his blood boil and kindled horror in his breast, as part of a Divine dispensation of Providence, which had to be endured, since it seemed so hopeless to be cured. Perhaps had he thought a little over this horrible paradox—for truly horrible it seemed to an unaccustomed mind—he would have found that with many of these people it was not the apathy of selfishness or even of despair, but simply the cooler view of minds which had become habituated to things that came upon him with all the harshness of novelty. But it was a defect of his character to be intensely earnest—a defect, that is according to the world's way of thinking and for the world's way of taking things—so that the reaction against these people and all that they represented was even extreme. He began to wonder and to inquire, whether it was good, or even tolerable for society to maintain a class whose first main care was to maintain itself, regardless of all other considerations economic or political? Carlyle was just then blowing in the ears of the youth of England, those powerful trumpet-notes by which he stirred them up to believe in and act up to the “eternal verities,” and to distrust the dispersed and manœuvred political forces which have in our day been substituted for more concentrated and forcible government. But the great prophet did not run away with Jobson. While he stirred up his whole nature, and dissolved therein many crudities and encrustations, he did not succeed in convincing our hero that liberty was more dangerous than a paternal force in good hands; for Jobson saw that this latter was personal, and might die, while constitutional liberty, and the tradition and practice of popular rights, remained with all their blessings from generation to generation. His revolt therefore was from Power in every autocratic form, and his appeal was to the people, to shape its own destinies and solve its own difficulties.

When after two years of quiet study on the spot, of the social and political conditions, following upon the more distant but in many respects more comprehensive views, which he had gained in Canada from a close study of the English journals and reviews, Jobson began to see his way, and to throw out his burning thoughts, there was in them a wild, untamed energy and a wealth of striking illustration that led many readers to enquire "who the writer was?"

Thus, one day, Lord Mewbourne, the Whig Premier, asked his private secretary Mr. Alcibiades Algernon, as his lordship came into the library one morning from the breakfast-room in the mansion in Bruton Street :

"Who has written those six letters in the *Chronicle* on the 'present condition of the country?' They are sometimes crude, but they show great knowledge, a regard for accuracy in statements of fact, considerable force, and there is an attractive wildness about them, which is sure to make people read them? Whoever it is is a remarkable man."

"By great good luck, my lord, I learned only yesterday at Brooks's. Several men were speaking of them, and Lord Swallowtail informed us that the author was a friend of his, a Temple man reading for the bar and named Jobson."

"Jobson?" said the earl, a smile just flitting over his strong, shrewd features, "there is no taint of aristocracy about *him* at all events. He has talent whoever he is."

"He is a gentleman's son, and Swallowtail says a man of rare attainments and remarkable power—a wit—a——"

"Spare us the 'particulars,' " said the peer abruptly. "We judge of a man by the stuff he produces. Write a note to Swallowtail to make a point of giving me information about this young man next time he meets me."

Lord Swallowtail gave a very flattering account of Jobson, so favourable that the shrewd Premier said :

"How did you first become acquainted with this young gentleman? He is not a Norfolk countryman is he?"

"No; I simply met him at table when eating my dinners at the Temple," replied Lord Swallowtail. "I particularly noticed him. He was always so vivacious, so

well up in everything and at the same time possessed such easy and independent manners. I afterwards found that his mother's family did come from Norwich, and that they have some connections there."

"Humph—has he a sister or anything of that sort?" said the Premier, who was himself of an amorous nature, glancing at his *vis-à-vis* with just a little humour in his eye.

"I daresay he has," replied Lord Swallowtail, with steady adroitness. "His father is a doctor in Canada with an immense family."

"No lady in the case, eh, Swallowtail?" The keen-eyed Premier had detected just the *souffçon* of a flush on Swallowtail's sedate face, and rather enjoyed pushing him a little. The young Lord's precocious gravity was the joke of his friends.

"Well, my Lord, if you desire to know, Jobson has an aunt living with him at the Temple, an agreeable person, aged about forty. I will ask him to bring her—"

"Stay," said the Premier with dignity. "You say he comes from Canada. Has he any influential English connections?"

"Not important ones. He is the grandson of a respectable old doctor down in Monmouthshire. Cainham, by the way, is very intimate with him, an old family friendship I believe."

"Oh! well; Cainham is a rising fellow, on the wrong side though. The man is a gentleman then."

"Perfect."

"Keep your eye on him Swallowtail—we shall want him. It is a pity he is so young and has no wealthy or aristocratic connections. It is a case of adventure, you see. That at all events secures him to us. He will keep however. There are two or three rising young adventurers, of admirable impudence on the other side, and we shall have to meet Cossack with Cossack."

Thus Jobson had been discussed in high quarters, and knew of it, though he would not have liked to hear the Premier's last remark.

His friend Lord Swallowtail—a Baron in the peerage of the United Kingdom—was one of those steady-going, not

over-brilliant, but often very able, shrewd, practical men-of-business, who come in the third or fourth generation of a peerage originating with some learned Lord Chancellor or a rich banker. He was quiet, solid, well-read, growing bald at a little over thirty, and exhibiting already in his strong, heavy, compact frame some of the qualities of his character. His face of a healthy English tint was inclined to squareness, with a good, high forehead, and red, close-cut whiskers, a shaven chin, thin lips, under a nose large and straight, which enhanced the generally massive firmness of his features. His blue eyes alone softened the effect of this banker's physiognomy, one that had descended to him from his grandfather, Mr. Humphrey, who had been ennobled for lending a considerable sum of money to George III. for private purposes. Lord Swallowtail was rich, but his wealth gave him very little pleasure. He administered it, just as he would have done the business of a bank, with great care and ability, setting stewards, bailiffs and solicitors at defiance, and enjoying the fun of trumping their poorly played cards. His tastes were simple, his talents inclined him to work, and his position enabled him to take a place in politics, at a very early period of his life. He never spoke in the House or in the country without showing an accurate statistical knowledge of his subjects, and without eloquence, his closely reasoned arguments delivered in a quiet business-like style, won him very soon a place in the esteem of the leaders of the Whig party to which he belonged. He was now Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and at a time of crisis in Canadian affairs, he had received from Thaddæus Jobson some very timely aid in drawing up important memoranda for the Secretary of State.

The morning after the conversation with the Premier, a hackney took Lord Swallowtail into Temple Lane, and he descended at Elm Court. He mounted the stairs and as he expected found Jobson, at work in the little library,—there were as yet no attorneys' clerks with briefs to disturb the quiet of the student's mornings—and his Aunt, Bertha Jobson, in a neat brown stuff dress, seated at a little table in the window taking notes out of a big book. When she

saw who came in, as Jobson on recognising his visitor pushed open the inner baize door, she looked up with a little blush of pleasure and rose to welcome the young peer. Swallowtail bowed and shook hands with the greatest courtesy, and placed himself in a chair which enabled him to see her figure, glorified by the fresh almost midday light coming in through the window.

He told Jobson how the Premier had inquired about him, keeping back his own replies and the objectionable part of Lord Mewbourne's remarks. In doing this the young lord developed a surprising—because from a man of his phlegmatic temperament an unexpected—amount of earnestness. He principally addressed himself also, which was only polite, to Miss Jobson.

"You see, Miss Jobson, it practically assures Jobson's position. We want such men, and now that without a hint from anybody the Prime Minister has been obliged to notice him, it is plain that the time is not far distant when he will be given an opportunity of distinction."

"I *knew* those letters would be noticed," said Bertha Jobson, with a triumphant tone and expression of countenance. "They were so out of the common and so daring."

One of her little feet came out from under her dress and she gave herself a little shake of satisfaction, as she looked at Jobson.

"What a delightful thing to have some one to take such deep interest in one's work," said Lord Swallowtail with great sobriety, and as if the contemplation of the fact in existence before him had suddenly aroused this reflection. "I wish somebody would care as much for me."

Bertha laughed and so did Jobson.

"You have plenty of brothers and sisters," she said in quite a commonplace manner, "and Taddy and I, you know, are *very* old friends, and we are foolish enough to be enthusiasts together."

"Ah!" said Lord Swallowtail. "It requires enthusiasm to evoke enthusiasm. I have none, I know; never had. But now, sir, you must hold yourself ready to the call of your country—*id est* the only party which can save the country from those conditions which you have so

eloquently and powerfully exposed. We shall want you in Parliament."

Jobson nephew and Jobson aunt both shook their heads.

"We are not rich," she said simply. "It requires money to go into Parliament. How much?"

"Oh! a thousand pounds, I daresay," said the Peer. "If you really wish to know, Miss Jobson, I will have some statistics taken out—yes—it shall be done to-day"—taking a note in his pocket-book. "You shall know the average for small boroughs. He is sure to get a nomination."

Lord Swallowtail spent an hour in this agreeable colloquy, wasting his own time and that of the public, and that of Jobson and his aunt. At length he took leave, always sedate, but his blue eyes seemed to beam a moment as he took Miss Jobson's hand.

"Are you—you never coming to Mayfair again?" he said to her. "Adelaide is always asking why you desert her so shockingly."

"We have been so very busy," said Bertha Jobson. "Haven't we, Taddy?"

"Yes," said Jobson. "We hardly deserve to have friends, for we have no time for friendship."

"A mistake, Jobson," said Swallowtail, speaking now with a real emphasis in his tone. "You should remember that in an old country like this you require to make friends diligently if you wish to succeed, and in your case it is specially necessary. You have none of those early associations, and school and college friendships, which root fellows irremoveably in Society, and help them so much."

"Ah well!" said Jobson carelessly. "I esteem friends like you, Swallowtail, but I am a curious person. I would rather not be helped on in that way. If I succeed it must be by virtue of the *vis major*."

The noble lord with a stare of surprise, not wholly pleased, looked at Taddy who was nearly a head taller than he was, and whose animated face full of all its light and strength and stretched out hand, showed how genuine was the sentiment to which he had just given expression. Swallowtail shook his head gravely. Suddenly he ventured on an epigram and

one of those solid epigrams that occasionally escape from practical heads.

"*Vis Major*, always has to work its way up hill against a combination of all the *Vires Minores*, and you must remember that combination is an enormous one because it means all the rest of the world. It is only once in a hundred million times that *Vis Major* conquers the combination and it often breaks its own skull in doing it."

With this sententious observation, struck out of the sensible mind of Lord Swallowtail, by Thaddæus Jobson's audacious bounce, the peer took his leave.

"He is a clever fellow," he said to himself, as he descended the stairs. "But that is not the spirit for success in England—certainly not in the Whig party."

While he went down the stairs, Jobson took his aunt's two arms in his hands and holding her off looked roguishly in her eyes.

"He's quite gone—it is not *me* he cares about, but you."

"Taddy," she said sweetly, with just a little quiver of the eyelashes, "if you only knew how much it pains me to joke in that way you would spare me."

He clasped her in his arms and kissed her :

"Dear, dear auntie, I will never do it again."

For two years, since the death of her mother and sister, Bertha Jobson, getting on in years, though scarcely looking any older (as if her long dream had checked her growth, and left her to take up life again where she had dropped it) except in the slightly matured outlines of her figure which had been in younger years so fine, had lived with her nephew in these chambers. Her face without losing anything of its delicate beauty, had taken on the sheen of culture, there where a fine line just above the eyes and across the brow, faintly indicated the growth of the perceptive faculties, according to phrenologists, and the slight sharpening of the soft outlines of the nose, had changed the sweet infantile expression of the face, into something more strong as well as more refined.

Full as ever of fun, loving beyond any sister, so good and pure that the rudest atmosphere grew soft around her and evil seemed to shrink back from contact with her noble

simplicity, Bertha was Taddy's good angel. Few strangers' steps profaned the sanctuary in Elm Court, where he had enshrined her, spending his fair allowance in making it worthy of such a presence. In return she was his house-keeper, sometimes his reader, always his encourager, often his companion, when sauntering down to Chelsea Stairs by the old Cheyne Walk, he embarked in a skiff, and pulled up stream to Putney, then a pretty village, where they would dine and lounge. Those were days of pure and holy pleasure.

She had become a familiar figure in the Old Temple. Often she could be seen in the gardens walking along the old cankered piece of embankment that gave upon the muddy flats of the river, with her tell nephew by her side, bending down towards her with a gallant air and looking more like a lover than the child she had once dandled in her arms, youth still shone so freshly in the smooth cheek, and the fair skin, and the luxuriant hair, and in the neat coquettish dress. When she went out the bleared-eyed clerks with their blue bags, scuttled out of her way making awkward bows, the laundresses who knew her well, for there were few who had not received of her some token from a smile to a guinea, turned to look again and say "God bless her:" the young barristers stood aside with respectful but admiring glances when she met them in the narrow passages, or hastened their steps to catch a glimpse of the fair, sweet face: on Sunday when she went to the Temple Church the sly old Benchers would peer at her over their books, and the students and barristers would gather at the door to see her come out, and just as the martial gallants in the garrison at Bridgetown were wont to pay her homage so she passed through the old portico amidst the uplifted hats of the crabbed lawyers, with a calm smile of pleasure that meant no conceit and was thoughtless of evil. To Thadæus Jobson she was the very core of life. When he came weary into the dim old court and looked up and saw the glow through the painted window, his spirit rose, his step grew elastic, he ran swiftly up the steep, ancient stairs, and gave the signal on the outer door by which she knew that it was no stranger who stood without. And she admired her clever nephew.

"He looks so distinguished—he talks so well—he works so hard—he writes such beautiful things—he is so manly and so true"—these were the sort of phrases in which she wrote those dearly-prized memoranda about Taddy to the longing and loving mother far away.

She felt so sure of his future. Already two or three renowned names used to sound in those quiet rooms—names of men who had detected in Thaddæus Jobson, a tone and power of intellect beyond the common, and of a fresh order. His intimate friends were all older than he, an almost certain sign of early development and capacity.

To Jobson the illness which had succeeded upon his great disappointment, had been salvation. It was weeks before he slowly began to recover from the terrible shock. Then he was too listless and too weak to think much about its cause. It lingered as a horrible dream, but the real pain was over, for Emily Latouche had ceased to be to him anything worthy of his thought—the idea of her created revulsion. It was a healthy reaction. When at length he rose from his bed and began to see his friends, they were quick to note that at least his mind was cleared of clouds, and that he had shaken himself for ever free from that fatal influence.

He never said anything about the incident. But he had for a time become a cynic. During his illness, Marian and the doctor had held anxious converse on Taddy's future, and the result was that, acting on Roger's advice, they resolved to send their son "home" to England, and to spend a few months at Ludlow and then to read law in the Temple.

"He has a future, I think," said Roger, "far worthier than any to be secured in this narrow, rank, weedy, Stygian, worthless hole of a province. Imagine him disputing with creatures like Tom Skirrow the premiership of Upper Canada, or brawling with fellows like Jewett before judges like ours. It would be too ridiculous. You would cheapen him below Autolycus. If he must stay here, send him up beside Grenville to farm a few thousand acres, and serve God and the nation with his bodily strength and his talent for business, but for heaven's sake don't ask him to use a *mind* in the peddling affairs of this wretched colony.

There is a field for him in England,—here he would only intellectually and morally, walk all his life through a valley of the shadow of death.”

So upon these bitter words, only too truthful, he had been sent to England with a fair allowance, and was now within a year of the time when he would emerge into public work, a barrister, challenging the attention of the keenest and most critical bar and bench and the most exacting *clientèle* in the world.

At this time Harry Jobson, now Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Jobson, K.C.B., had returned from a visit to Cornwall, where he had spent the few autumn months, and, having landed safely by the packet at Bristol, had posted up to London. General Jobson was now a man of perhaps six and a half lacs, with a very sound constitution and a very ordinary temper. The opinion he had formed of Jobson, as he announced it to the doctor, was as follows :

“A clever fellow, Arthur, that boy of yours with lots of go in him ; would always ride straight up to the enemy and handle his forces with great steadiness, though perhaps a little pushing and fractious you know—blurts out things—inclined to be Radical too, and I detest Radicals—has actually got hold of some fellow called Jeremy—Jeremy Taylor eh?—no Bentham—absolute revolutionists I was told, and Taddy, sir, defending him—talks a little too fast—though deuced well d’ye see?—and I should say a devil for work. Always keeps his brain going, you know—writes, by George—in periodicals—trash I suppose, I never read it, but it brings in something. O yes he’ll do, I think—but these book-bred fellows want a year in India under a good Colonel to take all their confounded conceit out of them.”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

FOUR years' patient digestion had been rewarded by a call to the bar of England—how these practical reforms sweep away those dear old-world absurdities!—Thaddæus Jobson's call party was over and the next morning's headache had passed away; he was now a full-fledged lawyer, and up the lane, at Childs's Bank in a big ledger, pored over by a dingy clerk, in a dingy little den, a thousand pounds stood to the credit of "Thaddæus Jobson, B.A., Barrister-at-law of Number 4 Elm Court, the Temple, Esquire." Furthermore a cheque for twenty-seven pounds, two shillings and one penny sterling had been paid in by Jobson, being his half-profits of a little book on the "Ideal of Government," which Messrs. Pillbury, Spillbury, Billbury, Blackstone, Maxton and Fleece had published "on half-profits."

This was in old times, before book-publishers had learned that all the profits belong to the tradesman and none to the genius and the lettered slave.

Nevertheless these were all the profits on 2000 copies which those estimable publishers had printed and sold at the price of seven shillings and sixpence each, or five shillings to the trade, thus turning over the handsome sum of five hundred pounds, in a brief time and with remarkable ease, and producing to the author thereon the egregious profit of a little over five *per cent.* of the turnover, for the brain-work which gave the book its impetus and value. Jobson had been flattered by the success of this brochure, which had been published anonymously, and had looked upon it as a little nest-egg, having said to himself, as silly authors are wont to do:

"It will cost two shillings per volume to print and bind," here he was far above the real mark, "sixpence to advertise"—not far wrong, being £50, enough to advertise freely in those days, "sixpence for contingencies—leaving, out of ten thousand shillings, one hundred and fifty pounds of clear profit or, seventy or eighty pounds to me."

Little he recked of publishers' ways! Of customary commissions! of secret discounts! of long credits and high prices!

However, against the account he kicked. One of his first errors in life.

The earliest and most useful lesson an author can learn in his career or profession is to be bled without complaint, to be milked without kicking, to lay to heart *sic vos non vobis*, and to take the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table.

When you kick against a publisher you kick against the pricks.

He called on Messrs. Pillbury, Spillbury, Billbury, Blackstone, Maxton, and Fleece, to remonstrate.

Mr. Spillbury, a heavy old gentleman, with great sleepy, hippopotamus-like eyelids, falling over great sleepy, hippopotamus-like eyes, with his spectacles up on his brow, received him with sleepy melancholy in a sleepy-looking hole in Paternoster Row. He gave a hippopotamic grunt as Jobson entered.

"Hugh! Hugh!" looking at the card our hero had sent in. "Mr. Jobson, I perceive. You asked to see a member of the firm?"

"Yes," said Jobson curtly. He had received the accounts only a couple of hours before, and had come up Ludgate Hill hot from the Temple. "I have just received this account of the sale of my book 'The Ideal of Government,' which I think you'll admit, sir, has been pretty successful."

"'The Ideal of Government' did you say? Hugh! yes—fairish!" replied the hippopotamus mildly, closing and opening his eyes with a lethargic deliberation. "Fairish—as the market is, sir. Are you the author, may I ask, sir?"

"I am, sir, and at all events, Mr. ——? I haven't the honour of knowing which of your list of partners I have the honour to be addressing—"

"Spillbury."

"Mr. Spillbury—two thousand copies have been sold, out of two thousand one hundred and twenty printed. The book was printed on half-profits, and my profits, sir, are represented to me as twenty-seven pounds, two shillings and one penny."

"Is it so much as that, sir?" said Mr. Spillbury with just a faint, heavy movement of surprise in his great eyelids, "I was not aware the outcome had been so good."

"What! Mr. Spillbury?" cried Jobson with energy, and opening up the accounts, "do you mean to tell me, a Temple barrister, sir, who I may take the liberty to tell you knows what he is doing, do you mean to tell me that out of this five hundred pounds you have received in hard cash, sir, I am entitled to only twenty-seven pounds and some impertinent small change?"

The hippopotamic gentleman, never moved his great cheeks, or his great thick lips, but he brought down his glasses on his sleepy eyes and taking the account from Jobson's hand glanced over it with a practised rapidity.

"Now, sir," said Taddy, who assumed for the moment the air and tone of an Old Bailey junior, "look at this. One hundred and ninety odd pounds, sir, for printing and paper—eighty-eight for advertising—ten per cent. commission on the purchases and expenses, ten per cent. discount, sir, on the creditor side on all the copies sold and thirteen to the dozen, and seventy copies sent to the Reviewers and Author. Where are the bills, sir, for the paper, printing, advertising?—let me see the firm's ledger, sir."

This was sacrilege. The hippopotamic blinders of the old gentleman just lifted an eighth of an inch, and his large, round full waistcoat quivered in sympathy.

"We never never show the firm's ledger to any one," he gasped—"the accounts, I presume, are on file." He slowly raised his hand to the bell-rope at his side. A clerk entered.

"Bring accounts 'Ideal of Government'—Number I 2646."

The clerk vanished and reappeared.

"There is no docket, sir, for that book—small affair—the items go through our ordinary term settlements."

"Ah! Has this account I hold in my hand been carefully drawn up and verified from the term bill from printers, binders, stationers, and advertisers?"

"O yes, sir—quite as usual."

"You see! Mr. Jobson," said the ponderous individual, managing to cast a glance in the direction of his visitor. "There is nothing more to be said. I should say, if you will forgive me the observation, the account is—a—a very flattering one for a first effort—very flattering indeed," said the old gentleman laying two podgy hands over his rounded figure, and just touching the watch-ribbon that hung from his fob, as if to suggest that he really would be obliged soon to look at his watch.

"Excuse me, there is a good deal more to be said, sir," answered Jobson, growing more energetic and determined as the obstruction became more developed. "You have entered into partnership with me in this book, and you are bound, I may tell you, sir, as a matter of law, to vindicate and prove every item of this account from first to last. Now, to begin, I demand to know where the stationer's account is—the name of the stationer—his address—have you received any discount from him, in addition to charging me ten per cent. in the most barefaced manner?"

"Excuse me, sir," said the old gentleman, "it is the custom of the trade, sir, ten per cent. for rent, clerks, business, *etc., etc.*"

"Very well, Mr. Spillbury, granted; then why do you also take off ten per cent. on the other side from all sales before accounting?"

"Custom of the trade, sir; covers 'returns,' losses by bad debts, extra discounts allowed—"

"How many extra discounts have you allowed the trade on my books, the whole of which have sold in seven months, Mr. Spillbury?"

"Really, sir, you must excuse me; it is the custom of

the trade, sir, rather singular case of curiosity, sir, I might almost say of ignorance of the publisher's ordinary way of doing business, sir."

"Thank heaven I *am* ignorant of it, sir!" said Jobson rising in a fury and speaking in it too. "What you call 'the custom of the trade,' sir, seems to be nothing more nor less than a deliberate system of concealment and fraud—do you hear me, sir!" shouting at the old gentleman who had completely shut his eyes at the frightful word.

Mr. Spillbury opened his eyes and looked towards the clerk who was still in attendance.

"Take a note of that, Mr. Calfskin, did you hear the word 'fraud?'—Really, sir, you are young, and evidently unacquainted with the world—with the publishing world at all events—but you must excuse me, I cannot discuss the question with you."

"I shall consult my solicitor at once, sir," cried Jobson in a rage, taking up his hat.

"The sooner the better I should say," said the old gentleman with another grunt.

And with this Parthian shot in his ear the young author rushed from the publishers' den into the dirty Row, into the dirtier lane known of Ave Maria, into the Stationers' Hall Court where the grand old sycamore grew as it grows now, and out by the alley into Ludgate—and then only, when clear of the air of the stationers and the publishers, he drew his breath freely. The exaltation, however, which Jobson experienced, as he walked along, was not justified by realities, for he had made lasting enemies of one of the greatest publishing houses in the kingdom.

To the irritated and inexperienced author it seemed necessary that he should at once challenge the proud firm to mortal combat in the law. For his articles and letters and leaders in reviews or journals his pay had been so handsome, but this beggarly twenty-seven pounds odd shillings—ending with a penny which was in itself an insolence—for the brightest and most ambitious product of his brain, burned into his mind, and set up quite an inflammation.

Striding through Blackfriars he bethought him of his

friend Winnistoun of King's Bench Walk, a Templar known and loved the Temples over. Winnistoun was one of those men who never lose the fondness for youth, never find it, if ingenuous, too frivolous, too enthusiastic, too crude. While the largeness of his nature and intellect permitted him freely to range with the great men of science, the great thinkers, the great politicians of his day, he remained always simple-hearted and always young. The small keen eyes planted deeply in his great face under an extraordinarily massive brow, showed at once the man's alertness of mind and ready understanding of things, while they beamed ever with a gentle light that made them fascinating even to men—but most attractive to women. It was not only to the *justum et tenacem virum propositi* that Winnistoun won all regards. There was a strange mingling in him of wit and sober sense, of gentleness with manly force, of practical sagacity with a fondness for the light and humorous. His name, William Warleigh Winnistoun, was far more pretentious than he who bore it.

For more than fifteen years he had occupied the small but beautiful chambers in King's Bench Walk, which Jobson had taken the liberty to copy in Elm Court. Winnistoun loved art and understood it in all its phases, and was one of those, who even then anticipated the more modern theory—that beauty is a thing good in itself, not necessarily a luxury, and worth cultivating in the most commonplace things of life. You might see a cheap tumbler on Winnistoun's table, but when you came to look at it some beauty in its form was sure to strike you. He could not buy a door-mat that was grotesque, or a candle-stick that had no mark of care and thought in its design beyond that of the thickheaded British brazier who wished only to make a thing that would last.

Winnistoun was the son of a Scotch gentleman—whose lineage and locality I dare not begin to set forth as I cannot spare fifty pages to the exacting particularity of a Scotch lineage and connections—and a French mother, a lady of good family in Touraine. From a boy he had spoken French and English together, and the French and Scotch blood which mingled in him, and the French and

English language and literature, in both of which he was at home, seemed together to have made of him a rare composition of wit and sense—the wit was sometimes Parisian in its lightness and delicacy, the sense was the sagacity, of the canny Scot.

Only to see Winnistoun's table was a revelation of the man's life. A glowing, grateful, letter from India from a young officer whom he had helped and encouraged to enter the service, when with his widowed mother he seemed thrown hopeless upon the world. A note from an old college-mate, down in the country, struggling as a poor parson with a large family of children, "Dear W—It can only be you—that £10 gives us indeed a merry Xmas—we pray for you night and morning." A slip from Putney, "We are so grateful, Agnes and I, for your introduction to Signor Pasquale Pasquile; he says Agnes's voice is magnificent," and he undertakes to give her lessons for nothing. Oh! that Alfred was alive to thank you." An ill-written scrawl from Bedford: "Dear Mr. Winnistoun—I received the guinea in a registered letter, and I will do my best to get the scholarship. It is so jolly up at this school, and there are such nice fellows here, &c., &c." And so on, men, women, children, whose difficulties had been eased, whose ways had been opened, whose lives had been cheered, by the wise generosity of a friend with benevolence that was widespread but that never slept, and never ceased its earnest and particular watchfulness. Twenty or thirty young men at the bar found Winnistoun's rooms their centre in London, Winnistoun's wisdom their pole-star in every dark moment of adversity or trial. In his breast were locked up a thousand secrets; sorrowful husbands and heartbroken wives went to him with their sad tales, and he was the arbitrator in many a family dissension, the healer of many a family breach. And through it all, with his big head filled with all these things, he was ever calm and gentle, and unwearied, and genial. If you were inclined to discredit that such a man ever lived, I say you can shake hands with him even now, for the grey hair and wrinkling brow are not evidences of any failing in the energy of this man's love and devotion to his

kind. Were there no sorrows in his life? Yes. But he consumed them in secret, and the world could never repay him for the solace that he gave it.

Jobson found the outer door open, and Winnistoun sitting over his correspondence. His face broke out in a radiant smile when he saw our hero.

"Laggard! Three days since you promised to see me. And how is the fair Aunt—the Angel of the Elm?"

"Well," said Jobson. "And as infatuated as ever about her worthless nephew. But talk not of the gentle fair. It is *horrida bella*, I am upon, sir. I am in a rage—I foam—I burn—Mine is *sæva indignatio*."

"Then shut the door that the world may not overhear your madness. Take that seat. I keep it for lunatics. What is the matter?"

"I have been robbed," exclaimed Jobson.

"Robbed? Elm Court invaded—where were the watchmen?"

"No, my dear sir, robbed by another Barabbas—in the shape of a publisher."*

"O ho!" cried Winnistoun his broad features dilating in a smile. "You are rather hard on Barabbas. My dear sir, it is an old story. Fifty men have told me the same thing over and over again sitting in that very chair. I know all about it—'custom of the trade,' eh? 'Commissions'—eh?—fifty thousand copies sold and only ten thousand accounted for? I have heard all those stories from disappointed authors time and again—sometimes, from poor fellows whose belief in their own bad cases was so humorously sincere as to be heartrending! But, first let me hear *your* version, and then we will pass judgment."

Jobson repeated his experience of the morning with animation and some histrionic circumstances.

Winnistoun laughed and took it with exasperating coolness.

"Well, Jobson, you are but one in a long illustrious line. You are a humble follower of him who sold a divine poem

* We are aware that Jobson may be said to be anticipating Douglas Jerrold's joke "Now Barabbas was a publisher." But genius sometimes corroborates genius!—ED.

for five pounds ready money for the first edition, and ten pounds for the two next. Thomson sold the 'Seasons' for one hundred and five pounds, and at the publisher's death his representative sold the copyright for five hundred and five pounds. Savage sold his 'Wanderer' for ten pounds. Thaddæus Jobson's 'Ideal of Government' at twenty-five years of age brings him in only twenty-seven pounds, some shillings and a penny—the penny I own is aggravating—the worst of mint sauce. You could have borne it in a guinea."

"Don't joke about it," said Jobson, who smelt a little satire in his friend's speech. "I ask you, is it to be endured? I want to take it up seriously; not that I care about it personally you know—it is a small affair,—but as a matter of principle. There are other weak men whom these people grind down to powder and whose battles I who am young and strong ought to fight.

"Three-fourths of the lawsuits I have ever had to do with," said Winnistoun, "have come to me professing to have been taken up or defended on 'principle'—the truth being that the 'principle' was personal animosity or obstinacy. Well now, sir, what do you propose to do?"

"I thought of commencing a suit against them at once, without giving them any time to think about it."

"Hum! you wish to put you head into Chancery?"

"I suppose we must go there," said Jobson laughing, "we need discovery of the accounts."

"Thaddæus Jobson, you have one thousand pounds at the bank, placed there for you by a too generous and most foolish uncle. Having been forbidden to waste it in electioneering, do you propose deliberately to squander it in law?"

"Oh! it won't take anything like that—and they are sure to be beaten in the long run."

"It may take every penny, probably will. And have you thought what it means,—days and nights of worry and hard work, months and perhaps years of fighting, and when you get the victory, *if* you get it, your costs only half paid, and Barabbas, who is rich and doesn't mind it a bit, laughing in his sleeves at you. I' faith, my friend, you are cutting your-

self out some twenty years' work at the bar. It's a good introduction. Cap it by conducting your own case."

"The very thing I thought of doing!" cried Jobson.

Winnistoun laughed. But presently under Winnistoun's cold *douche* of common-sense Jobson's ardour began to cool. The effort he made to keep his spirit up failed rather miserably.

The good-natured Winnistoun, skilfully drew him away from the subject.

"Thank God!" he said, "I am not an author! I was once tempted to begin writing a book, when a young fellow like you came in to me with just such a story, and he set me reflecting, that if I wrote the book, I might find myself in the same position as he. I knew that if that happened I should fight, as you just now proposed to do, and, seeing only ruin and sorrow in the business, I abandoned the idea of enlightening the world to wrong myself. Authors are ever a plaintive lot; chalking your *Sic vos non vobis* on every wall, be it palace or stable: swearing that some other man is cribbing your ideas or being sworn at by him for cribbing his, or with great profundity—of attitude at least—declaring of the other two that there never were any ideas to crib: or being robbed of rightful earnings by the harpy called publisher. In olden times your complaint was that the Royal bounty did not reach you because some wooden-headed Minister Burleigh stopped the way. So you took your revenge in angry verses.

"I don't remember," said Jobson.

"Don't remember Spencer's lines on Burleigh?"

*'Full little knowest thou, that hast not tried,
What hell it is in suing long to bide;
To lose good days, that might be better spent;
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
To spend to-day, to be put back to-morrow,
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow;
To have thy princess' grace yet want her peer's;
To have thy asking, yet wait many years;
To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares;
To eat thy heart thro' comfortless despairs;
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone.'*

"The author's lot—dupe, zany, sycophant, his brains are

picked for others' enjoyment, for others' profit, and his soul—perhaps—goes to heaven !”

“Does it ?” said Jobson—“Barabbas at least will not be there. It was only a repentant thief who got in. However, I suppose I must own these men too strong for me. Well, at least I have entered my protest.”

“And made some very powerful enemies. You will never be forgiven by that house. You won't be asked to write in the ‘Prospective’ again. You will have to forego the pleasure of being favourably reviewed, as you were last time, in the ‘Censor,’ and Mr. Pillbury, the senior's dinners are the most literary in London. You have done enough mischief to-day and if I were you I would give Satan a holiday. To-morrow may bring fresh openings.”

“You are a caustic friend !” said Jobson rising. “And yet your caustic never burns like other men's.”

“I give the soother with it—a little milk of kindness—then it does not burn so badly. But how ill a nature we all have may be judged from the fact that these caustics and acids rouse people up more than arguments and entreaties. Satire, sarcasm, epigram, lampoon, diatribe, pasquinade, caricature, all the modes of burning and stinging ridicule, are more effective in proportion to their quantity than the most potent appeals and arguments that have ever been spoken or written. A little word drops as an acid on a vast abuse and shrivels it up. A statesman is knocked over by a lampoon—a monarch's throne is shaken by an epigram—a woman's empire shattered by a gibe.”

“You think that is because it ministers to ill nature !”

“Yes, which is the largest part of human nature.”

“Well, you have given me an idea. I will slay my publishers with an epigram.”

“Ah ! beware. It was not Barabbas who suffered. The world will always prefer him. For a sarcasm to succeed it must be directed against someone whom the world is hating or disposed to hate—it is thrown wildly against success. I carefully said that sarcasm and satire succeeded most in proportion to *quantity*, which is fortunately very small—for, needing wit to make them effective, if not indeed to make them at all, they are not so readily found. I dare say

you could write a clever epigram on Pillbury—but Pillbury would only laugh, and the world would not laugh at all, and all your brother authors would say you were a disappointed man and inclined to be conceited—”

“Stop!” cried Jobson putting his hands over his ears. “I must leave these chambers. The atmosphere is charged with selfishness and worldly wisdom. It is clear there is no room in London for ‘the noblest work of God.’”

“No, my friend, but there is still a chance for you!”

Winnistoun’s eyes sparkled brightly, as Jobson ran away, and he said to himself—“He will do—if impulse will always wait behind prudence.”

“Aunt Bertha,” said Jobson, when they were dining together at the London, on Ludgate Hill, after he had related all that had occurred, “I cannot conceive what was the matter with Winnistoun to-day. I never knew him so biting and severe.”

“It was because he loved you, Taddy,” said Bertha, as, resting her chin on her hand, she looked with animated eyes and a bright colour in her cheek at Jobson.

He thought she looked unusually handsome, and wondered why it was so.

CHAPTER XXXV.

GENERAL JOBSON'S QUARTERS.

GENERAL HARRY JOBSON wishing to be near his club, among his old friends, and in the centre of London's busiest lazy life, took a small house in Arlington Street, the lower end of which is a quiet *cul-de-sac*, rarely invaded by trampling horses or rolling wheels, with moss and feeble herbage peeping up between the flints of the uneven paving. This house he caused to be handsomely furnished, everywhere except in the second floor back, where his old camp and barrack furniture was laid out on a piece of India matting. The best bedroom in the house and a little room adjacent for a boudoir were prepared for his sister Bertha.

"I don't ask you to give up Taddy just yet, Bertie my dear," said the gallant old general. "He is a young fellow, and your influence over him is good, and if you only won't bolster him up in his conceit, which I am afraid you are inclined to do. He will have to get married some of these days—a good thing for a lawyer to marry young, I'm told, and I want you to feel that there is a home here all ready for you, and your bachelor brother with all his heart and rupees at your disposal—and you are worthy of it, Bertha, if ever a woman was."

The General regarded her with kindling eyes.

"I have seen your friend Lady Pilkington," he went on nodding. "Met her at Akerman's when I was down in Gloucester: fine woman, terribly smart for her age—pretty far advanced I should say now—a perfect model of a general's wife, straight in the back, steady under fire, always up at tattoo, and ready for anything. No slovenly drill there I can tell you. Ah! if I had only come across such a woman when I was in my majority, how different my life would have been!"

He said this with a sigh, the real significance of which neither of his auditors understood.

Harry Jobson had shown his sister and nephew over the new house. Bertha was enchanted—Jobson approved everything with the air of a *connoisseur*, though he looked a little sadly at his aunt, when the General spoke of taking her to his home. She caught the look and nodded to him smilingly :

“Plenty of time yet, Taddy !”

“Now Taddy,” said the General, as they sat at lunch in the comfortable dining room, with the mahogany shining, and the silver which loaded sideboard and table shining, and the polished grate shining, and the face of Vance, the trusted servant of the General, shining most of all above his great white choker, and everything looking as rich and cheerful as could be, “I am not going to settle down permanently in these rooms until warmer weather comes. I must get out of this cursed climate—and would be off to-morrow had I not vowed that I would eat my Christmas dinner in England this year. I have picked up three or four men at the Service who have nowhere else to go to, and they will come here and so will my sister and you I hope. But we will leave London the day after Christmas and go to Paris and then on to Italy. I daresay you will not be badly wanted by your clients before February, and a man is a baby till he has seen something of the *grande monde*.”

“Admirable,” cried Jobson. *Patrue mi patruissime !* My dream for years. You’re a Nabob. This is even better than the thousand pounds.”

“In Paris I should like to see something of the *salons*,” said the General with a grand air. “We must polish up our French, sir, I shall get some first-rate introductions, and Lord Crabstock at the Embassy in the Faubourg Saint Honoré is an intimate friend of my old chum, Bellavere. We shall do very well. Do you speak French, sir ?”

“*Oui, mon général, passablement bien.*”

“Hum—Hum ! Very well, sir, you had better keep it till you want it, and you may want all you have. Mine

is not all I could wish. Bertha, my dear, where has he picked it up?"

A quick glance passed between Miss Jobson and her nephew.

"There was a friend of mine, a Madame de Lossy, at Newport, she lives there with Mademoiselle de Lossy, her daughter, and during Taddy's first six months with us down there they did a great deal of French together."

"I dessay! and a good deal of mischief perhaps. Now sir, no love affairs with French women, or, you mark my words, I'll cut you off without a rupee."

Jobson and his aunt laughed in chorus.

So the Christmas time came, as it should do to all, with joy to Bertha and to Jobson, with happy conditions, and bright health, and generous good-feeling for others, and hopeful outlook to the future. The General and two or three of his guests came down to attend the service at the Temple,—it was not so fine a service then as now—and after church they mounted up the cranky staircase at Elm Court, that Jacob's ladder for one angel at least, and drank a glass of fine old East India sherry whereof thoughtful and generous Uncle Hal had provided an ample supply in Jobson's locker. Then they went away to meet later on at the house in Arlington Street, at the early and most righteous hour of four, when men felt they could draw their legs up under the table, and take it easily and quietly, since there were eight good hours before them of honest eating and drinking.

It was beautiful to see old Colonel Bowser, of the Bengal Cavalry, with one arm in a sling, and a face that looked like a jolly Christmas fire, handing down Bertha, in her fine green satin gown and handsome lace, and the General sticking his arm under that of the somewhat shaky figure of Major Tolboys formerly of his own old regiment, and now an invalid on half-pay with scarcely a friend in the world, and placing him at his right, and plying him with port and Madeira till dear old Tolboys did not know one from the other, or his friends from himself. That was the mistaken kindness of those days, and, since it is over, we may thank God it has gone out of fashion, and yet recall it for the

kindness' sake. Then there was Major Balcarres, who had fought and been wounded at Chillipilli, and yet showed some signs of it in his lurch to one side and his halting gait, but whose bright firm eye, and determined mouth showed the sort of Englishmen that would be ready at any moment to set out from Cape Comorin with a sword at his side to fight his way alone to the Himalayas, at his own motion or his King's orders. And other veterans of the same sort.

Old Vance, the General's servant, with two assistants, one a pert, cherry-cheeked, cherry-lipped maid, with long, cherry ribbons, flying in her splendid cap, did the waiting, and the cook, to whom, coming to him out of the Duke of Portland's kitchen, the General had given the then extravagant sum of forty pounds a year, did the cooking to perfection. And as for the wines, which, beginning with the East India sherry of one voyage, gradually worked up to the claret, and then the old port and the old Madeira of two voyages, it opened the eyes of these gallant old boys, and unsealed their tongues, and made them so jovial that the whole room glowed with warmth and was electrical with fun and merry Christmas feeling, and never had Jobson felt that time could be made to pass so jollily or so genially as the hours fled by that night.

And when the cloth was removed, and the shining mahogany appeared—the old General had bought a handsome second-hand table with a top like a mirror, “late the property of a nobleman deceased,”—and after Sir Harry had toasted the Queen, when Colonel Bowser rose, and with many a hum, and ha, but with a bold, round, rollicky voice much lubricated with port, proposed “the fair young hostess of the evening long life to her and a happy one!”—every one rose and Bertha was so overcome by the real warmth of the feeling they showed, that a little tear slipped down her face, and even Taddy's eyes grew watery with pleasure. Then she rose and curtsied to the gentlemen and left the room, followed by the gallant voices with a hearty “God bless you,” said out and meant, as those things are rarely at least said out in this chill, unsentimental age.

“Now,” said the General, “draw round close. We have the evening before us and plenty of wine. Balcarres that

is '98—Tolboys this Madeira has been in Crappes' cellar for thirty years. Taddy, you are a barrister and can take care of yourself, sir."

And at this stage we may leave with the servants.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

NOTES FROM PARIS, AND A DISAGREEABLE SURPRISE.

Paris, January 2, 18—

DEAR AUNT BERTHA,
 We have descended at the 'Hotel Mauriguy,' near the Tuileries, and looking over what in summer are the gardens, now covered with snow. It is so delightful to get into this quaint and brilliant civilisation. What marvellous palaces and public buildings, what grand private houses, what imperial sweeps of streets and *boulevards*! Uncle Harry was over here many years ago, during one of his long leaves home, and knows his way about famously. His French is delightful. It is so thoroughly English.

As for the city, I cannot tell you how deeply it impresses me, just as London did when I first saw it. Imagine the effect of it on a carefully educated man coming from such a place as Canada!

It is so gay, and so *triste*! And to me the *triste* predominates.

In the *boulevards* booths are erected like those at an English fair, for a vast number of people, who sell *étrennes*, such as flowers, oranges, fancy stationery, gewgaws and jimcracks of all kinds. It is a deeply interesting and touching study of life to saunter along slowly and watch the various inmates of these little shops. Freezing as the air is the men will be dressed in blouses or light coats, the women without bonnets, and with only knitted jackets over their thin dresses, and there they sit or stand, and call for custom to the passers-by, crying their wares with lively pertinacity. Many of these poor people risk all they have in this week's cold venture. They only have a week of it. Some sights sadden one's heart. Often, as you pass along, while round

some booths crowds are standing listening to a noisy auctioneer or cheapjack, who may be selling a top, or a lead pencil, or a cure for corns, all equally worthless, or to a humorous and histrionic orange-seller screaming out the virtues of his fruit,—you espy near by a quiet booth, with a few very cheap and dingy things spread out on the plain counter, and you catch a glimpse of a white face behind the indifferent lights, and a sense of the woebegone chills you to the heart. It may be a young face,—it is sometimes a pretty one,—it may be the wrinkled visage of an old woman, or the sober traits of a matron ; perhaps a little one nestles in the bosom, or sits disconsolately on the lap, but a heartrending story is told by the whole scene : the poor trash laid out there, the wretched creature behind it, forlorn and freezing, uncared for by the brilliant and joyous throng which rushes past, or stops to patronise the noisier and more impudent rivals. Here is a poor old man sitting patiently outside under no shelter, a little round table, with a wretched candle in a paper lantern drowsily lighting up half a dozen toy bears of wood, which being pressed in a certain way open their mouths, and make a little noise, that may represent, for their size, a growl. His head hangs listless, his lack-lustre eyes are fastened on the miserable stock that never decreases, hunger and despair are in his very air and attitude, the buoyancy of the morning has become the leaden hopelessness of the evening, the chill grows deeper and deeper as the night waxes old, and at length he gives one more poor weak outcry to the passers-by, just like a melancholy wail, and wearily packs up his trumpery, shoulders his seat and table, and trudges off to a supperless, hearthless cell—perhaps to some poor little shivering daughter who has been all day praying and hoping for a successful return at night. But ! another day of blasted hope, another night of chill and hunger, another dreadful step toward the dark abyss where hope is quenched for ever ! O my God ! Aunt Bertha—my heart bleeds, bleeds at these things ! These sorrows so patiently endured, so bravely faced, so persistently battled with—if there is a great good God why are they permitted to exist ; why do they go on unsolaced ? I cannot see them without my

heart splitting. How can He? You may say it is wrong to say this—it is the irrational way, I am sorry to say, in which women are taught by parsons to meet our difficulties nowadays. I desire only to know and feel the truth. In these gay streets, these sad sights overwhelm my soul with vague ideas of questions I dare not put, lest reason or faith should fail to find the answer. Why are such existences possible, so absolutely, fatally hopeless from cradle to grave, and on what theory of Divine o'erlooking can we reconcile them with love and mercy? If those on whom the Tower in Siloam fell were no wickedder than other people why did the tower in Siloam fall upon them? Talk about this to Winnistoun. He has a marvellous way of throwing over the parsons and yet sticking to orthodox and not irrational religion. He ought to have been a bishop—but had he been they would have burned him. My love to him ever

T. J.

Paris, January 5th, 18—

DEAR WINNISTOUN,

Here we are doing Paris, my gallant *patruus* and myself and his factotum—Vance. Vance is superb. He knows no French—"It ain't a language for a gentleman, sir; I never knew a English *gentleman* proper, sir, as could get 'is tongue round it, not to touch these Frenchies. You see, sir, a good honest English mouth *can't* manage their mincing, chopping, slávery sort o' lingo. 'Taint made for men, it's more like a language for monkeys, sir."

So Vance insists on speaking his English, which he calls "the *king's*," to everyone, hotelkeepers, postboys, chambermaids—the latter he does manage to convey his meaning to somehow—and all at the top of his voice. The dear old boy, my uncle, to tell you the honest truth, knows very little, but he is proud of his acquirement, and airs it freely. You know I practised for several months in Monmouthshire with Madame de Lossy and her daughter—a charming young lady, by the way, very gentle and pensive and beautiful, and with a lovely voice.

We enjoy ourselves here ever so much, and it is quite refreshing to come across a character so genuine and so

simple, and yet so strong and obstinate as my uncle's. He is splendid. Everyone calls him *milord*, and when he gets into a passion, and all his French vanishes, and he breaks out in English, they run in all directions. We have dined with Lord Crabstock at the Embassy, and met there one or two people we knew. We also received a card for the *Duchesse d'Alençon's salon*, where we went *en grande tenue*. The General wore his decoration, and looked so distinguished that everyone was asking who he was. The *Duchesse* was particularly engaging to him—kind indeed to both of us,—and gave him her arm and took him about a bit. I followed like a dog—a big one too—and at one point he got into a dreadful scrape.

He could just make out what the *Duchesse* said, and he went blundering on with his Anglo-French dialect. The conversation turned on French and English ladies.

The old boy, as you know, has no idea of useless compliment. He said—I spare you his French—

“The French ladies are charming, but I prefer the English.”

“Oh, mon Général, the English are veritably charming, also have they a grace of nature very attractive, but I think the French ladies are more lively, more gay, more witty,—they have perhaps also more of artifice.”

“*Oui, oui, Duchesse,*” said the General bowing, I must give you his very words, pronounced standing in the centre of a brilliant circle, “*Je donne les femmes françaises le crédit de cela—elles ont beaucoup d'artifice—c'est tout à fait vrai—mais pour moi, je n'aime pas l'artifice dans les dames : je préfère les dames au naturel.*”

The *Duchesse* is a *grande dame* of the most *distinguées*, but she covered her face with her fan, and all the men round us were stuffing their handkerchiefs into their mouths, while the ladies looked every way. I gave Uncle Hal a tremendous squeeze in the arm, which made him look round at me with some anger.

He saw he had committed some *sottise*, but the *Duchesse* behaved admirably.

“*Mais,*” she said behind her fan in a stage whisper to her husband, who was standing near, “I find the General

perfect. Take me to supper, General—I must not lose you so soon.”

He was the lion of the evening.

The dear old boy went with her, and I could see she enjoyed immensely his grand simplicity, and he was charmed with her. But when he got home and after some difficulty dragged out of me an explanation of the little lingual slip he had committed he was furious, and swore he would never talk French with a French woman again. Is it not marvellous what a difference may be made by the wrong use of an idiom! And you know Uncle Hal with women is so chivalrous and so pure in all his manner and conversation, that I assure you this little *faux pas* upset him fearfully. He thought of writing and apologising to the *Duchesse*, but I pointed out to him that he would only, by doing that, make matters worse, and that the best way was to act as if unconscious of the solecism.

T. J.

Tours, France, January, 18—

MY DEAR WINNISTOUN,

Here we are, having left Paris yesterday, and I must tell you the reason why. It is a wonderful story. Uncle Hal and I went to the Odéon on Thursday to see *Tartuffe*. It rather wearied him, as his knowledge of French is limited pretty much to the necessities of life and a few expletives, so he proposed afterwards that we should go on the boulevards and visit a *café*. We strolled along and at length found a large one gaily lighted up with lamps, and plenty of the world inside, sitting at little tables and taking light refreshments like ices, coffees and liqueurs. Both sexes were fairly represented. He stalked up the room in his great cloak, his Cashmere shawl rolled round his neck as usual, and his nose and mustachios in the air, to a vacant table in a corner. He sat against the wall and I opposite on a chair, with my back to the next table, where I had noticed a rather flashy looking woman sitting, in a large hat, not very young but well-rouged and with very bright eyes. I had simply seen this in a single glance and took no further

notice of her. The General threw off his Cashmere and began to speak, when suddenly I heard a female voice from behind me cry out with a little shriek :

"What ! Harry Jobson !"

You should have seen the dear old boy's face. His eyes nearly started from his head, he stared over my shoulder, a picture of horror, his bronze features became pallid. I instinctively glanced round. The woman behind me, showing her white teeth inside her vermilion-tinted lips, and with a malicious sort of smile on her face, was regarding him with her bright eyes.

"Helena !" he exclaimed in a choking kind of voice. "Good God ! what brings us together here ?"

I saw he was deeply agitated and frightened. He grasped for his wrapper which he had laid down and picked up his hat.

"Oh !" she cried, "I think you had better not be in a hurry, Major Jobson——"

"General Sir Harry Jobson !" interrupted he involuntarily and bowing to the woman.

"General ! *tout mieux, mon vieux ami* !" I congratulate you. Do not be in a hurry to go, I beg of you. In fact I don't mean that you should run away so soon," she said, glancing with some meaning in her look at me. "I do not know your friend," she added.

"My nephew," said Uncle Hal mechanically and very stiffly. "My nephew, madam, and thank God a young man who knows little or nothing of the world in which you and I have moved."

"Precisely," she said, laughing, showing all her white teeth and nodding to me. "*Mais c'est un très joli garçon*. He speaks French ?"

"He does."

"Ah ! then let us see whether we have forgotten our Tamil."

She instantly began to speak with some animation in a strange but mellifluous tongue. The General listened with gravity. I could see he was excited ; his cheek was burning ; his eyes were uneasy ; he answered every now and then briefly and sometimes sternly. Once a tear



You should have seen that dear old boy & lace. His eyes nearly started from his head!

was in his eye—At that moment she began to speak English.

“We had better come back to our native tongue,” she said, peremptorily, “or our young nephew here may wonder what has made his gallant uncle drop a tear. Shall we tell him the story?”

“For God’s sake,” exclaimed the General hurriedly, “keep quiet.”

“Well I suppose we shall have an opportunity of a little private conversation hereafter, *n’est-ce pas?*” she said smiling at him with that curious smile. “Will you have the kindness to give me your card?”

Faded as she was, sorrowful looking, loud in voice and manner, there were times when she assumed a strange air of dignity and command.

The General took out his pocketbook, to get a card. It was full of French notes; she looked at them hungrily. His eye which was now clear and steady caught the glance. I saw his face soften a little.

“Helena, are you in want?”

“Always,” she said with a little giggle. “I am not so well off as I was when you knew me. But give me the card.” She glanced at it. “‘Mauriguy’s!’ *bien*. You are generally at home in the mornings, I suppose?”

“Y—yes,” said the General, “but—but, Madam, not to you. The past is past, let it be buried.”

“O very well, General Sir Harry Jobson, I must take my chance—perhaps, sir,” she said, turning to me, “as your uncle will not—”

“Peace, woman!” cried uncle Hal in a stern voice. “Not another word. At least respect the innocence of youth. Here—you say you want. At least I will help you. There!” and with a feverish haste he emptied out on the table before her all the money in his pocketbook, and snatching up his hat made for the door.

“Come away, Taddy,” he cried to me, and I followed. He threw a gold piece into the waiter’s hand and without waiting for change bolted. I had great difficulty in keeping up with him.

"Is that woman coming?" he gasped out presently as we sped along the pavement.

"No, sir—when I left she was counting the notes. You gave her an immense lot."

"Turn down here," he said, running down a by-street. "Be certain we are not followed. We must change our hotel to-morrow."

I had never seen him so put out. His great hand trembled on my arm and he walked unsteadily. Every now and then he gave a deep grunt and heaved a sigh.

"Terrible—terrible—humph—poor Helena!" At length we got to our hotel. He ordered Vance to pack up to leave next morning for Tours.

"We'll put them off the scent, my boy," he said to me, "and come back in a few days to the d'Orsay. We must change our base."

He walked up and down his bedroom, with great long strides pulling his mustachios, and muttering to himself.

At length he sat down on a chair and said to me :

"Taddy, sit down. You have no doubt been wondering at what you have seen to-night. You showed a wise discretion, boy, in asking no questions, but you are getting now well into manhood, Taddy, and perhaps it may be of some use to you to know the sad story connected with that woman. God knows," said the old man humbly bending his head down and speaking in a soft, deep voice, charged with feeling, "I have suffered deeply enough and sorrowed earnestly enough for my fault, but, Taddy, I have often seen that the penalties of one's faults are often direst long after we suppose their evils to have ended. All of a sudden they spring upon you again, like an Afghan from behind a rock or a ruin, or a tiger from a clump of grass, when your sword is in its scabbard and your gun probably hanging carelessly over your shoulder, and you are going along easily with a pipe in your mouth. That woman to-night is an apparition. It is ten years since I saw her. I thought she was dead or at least that she was leading an honest life in America, but here she is—and alas! in what circumstances?"

He put his head between his hands and caught hold of

his ears and looked on the ground awhile. Then he raised his head and looked at me with pain in his face.

"Thank God, Taddy, you have been brought up in a pure atmosphere and as yet you know little of the sins and sorrows of the world. I have been asking myself all this time whether I ought to reveal to you what I am going to say—but I remember that you are already a man—have come out into the great world to fight your own way—and you will have to encounter the temptations of life, just as we old fellows did,—and may God give you strength, my boy, to stand them better than some of us have done. Fifteen years ago, I was stationed with my regiment the — Madras Infantry, at Bangalore, a charming station on the hills, with a garrison, plenty of good military society. It is a place, to which some of the richer civilians came as a refuge from the dreadful heats of the coast and the intermediate stations. I was then forty-five years of age, not a young man, but I had been a bachelor all my life, and after my first two or three years' service became so engrossed in my profession that I may say I was a quiet and regular man. Not that I made any pretensions to any d——d sanctimoniousness, you know, but I used to feel as if the best way to serve God and my country was to do my best at my profession, and I did, and the reward came very rapidly. However there arrived at the station, one day about fifteen or sixteen years ago, near Christmas time, a lady, the widow of a young civilian at Tinniskinni who a year before had succumbed to jungle fever caught in tiger-shooting—a rather loose fellow I fancy—and this lady was exceedingly young and pretty, so that the whole garrison, went mad after her. Mrs. Colonel Dodson chaperoned her a bit, and Mrs. Dodson was the liveliest woman in the garrison, and this girl, who had given up mourning very soon and looked perfection, rode and danced and flirted and dressed to break the hardest hearts among us. But she was a regular imp—she drew every one on—and on—and on until half of us were by the ears about her, and ready to cut each other's throats on account of her. You don't know women yet, my boy, thank God, but when you do you will find they are very witches possessed of the foul fiend. Well, I fell

violently in love with her—she encouraged me and dropped me—I was a good-looking fellow, you know, then, and not a bad match either, and she liked me I believe—at all events she pretended to. I was drawn into a *liaison* with her—a horrible, disreputable thing, my boy, and one deserving of all the punishment it has given me since in ‘mind, body and estate,’ as the Prayer-Book says—and you mark my words those errors in one’s life will touch all three some day. I became quite infatuated with her, went with her to Madras, where by the way she became pretty notorious, and spent a good deal of my hard-earned savings on her. So foolish was I that in some of my letters I even promised to marry her, the last thing she wished, you know, but she held them over my head, until one day I surprised a young officer—Verulam, of my own regiment, with his arm round her waist. I knocked him down and spoiled his pretty face for life—” said the General his eyes sparkling and his mustachios seeming to bristle up—and then as he recollected himself a deep shadow falling over his face and subduing the excitement. “There was a tremendous row ; Verulam had to leave the service, and agreed to marry the woman and go off with her if I would find them ten thousand rupees which I did, and they went off professedly for America. It was a long time before I got over that. I exchanged into a fighting regiment on the North-west and ever since I have avoided women like serpents, and stuck to my sword and my profession. Now, Taddy—here you see what devilish long shots the devil takes—the woman turns up again—turns up again as you have seen her. It’s awful, boy—awful ! The face, once so fair and gay and innocent-looking changed into that paste-covered mask we saw just now ! Those eyes that once had such a liquid softness and charm, looking now like those of a cat or a snake—and the voice I used to listen to for its music, did you notice its hard, metallic, *false* ring ? God is my witness, I did not make her what she is—she was bad when she came up there among us on the hills—but then I took her up you see and she has insinuated herself into my life, and heaven knows what she may not do now she knows who I am and where to find me.

I got up and took the dear old boy's hand.

"Uncle Hal, it was very good of you to give yourself the pain of telling me this. I can a little understand what you feel, but I know a young fellow like me cannot give you counsel or comfort in such a case. You have repented of your error, and so far as I can see you have little responsibility for hers."

However he was not to be reassured, and so yesterday morning we came on here, a flat place, on the Loire with an interesting old cathedral, and some execrable wine, and the country all round covered with snow. We are to post on to Angers and Nantes and may even visit Bordeaux, for the General seems worried, and when he is worried he requires to keep on the move, so Vance says.

This morning after cutting his cheek with the razor and swearing tremendously at Vance, he went out for a walk before breakfast, and I caught him walking back from the bridge with a child in his arms half-frozen, which he had taken out of the mother's bosom and wrapped in his cloak, and the poor woman was running along at its side with her hands clasped and the tears running down her cheeks. He led her into a warm room in the hotel, and insisted on their serving her with a good breakfast, though the innkeeper rather demurred. One waiter who was somewhat impertinent he took by the ear and led screaming out of the room—and then he gave the woman some warm things which Vance fetched from a mercer's shop and let her go. "*Le vieux Anglais*" is already the wonder of the town, and whenever we go out, the General stalks along with his stick on his shoulder followed by a curious crowd of boys, and pointed at by the women who stand in the doorways. What a dear open heart he has! It is a pleasure to be with him. He is so unaffected in his honesty and simplicity, and, with all his assumption of brutality, so gentle. * * * * *

Yours affectionately,
THADDÆUS JOBSON.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A WOUND FROM A FRIENDLY HAND.

OUT of the whirl of the world, in the little villa of "Beaulieu," in the environs of Ludlow, it would have seemed to any observer, whether within or without, that a small bit of Paradise had been broken off and dropped down in that favoured spot—a mere *morçeau*, tiny, but exquisite in its refinement and beauty. The garden, which fronted the villa, was irregular in shape and moderate in size, but so long as weather would permit a flower to grow, it was a perfect study of well-arranged colour, and embowering luxuriance; at one time the white and lavender lilacs, at another the laburnum with its feathery gold, or the mountain-ash with its red berries, or the grand purple cones of the wistaria which ran up and was festooned above the ivy so carefully trained to one story, and divided the front of the villa with a fine magnolia: the prairie-rose that embellished the light porch, the round bed of standard roses in the centre of the plot, and all the wonderful profusion of wild and trained flowers about the place in every nook and corner, with quaint surprises of mosses and ferns and shells and rock-work; the low-browed close-clipped hedge inside the slight paling; the walks with their white crushed shell-lime, looking so bright amid the colour and verdure,—altogether, the view from the road of this little house, with its clear shiny windowpanes, its clean dimity curtains, drawn back in the centre with blue ribbons, and the glimpses into neat rooms inside, made the passer-by stop and look again and think with wonder how much could be made of a scene so diminutive. In truth, the home of

Madame de Lossy and her daughter was one of the shows of Ludlow.

Within, French neatness and taste reigned in every corner of the little household. The clean housemaid with her frilled pinafore and goffered cap and bright ribbons, the nattiness of everything in the house from the door-mat to the drawing-room curtains; the flowers so elegantly arranged: there was nothing that did not speak of perfect taste and pretty artifice.

Madame de Lossy was a lady of a matured figure, but its outlines were chastened by an elegant *corsage*. Her dark hair and eyes, warm-complexioned cheeks, soft, ruby lips, and fine teeth, and a brilliant expression of life, gave to features not handsome a marvellous charm. Mademoiselle de Lossy was one of the beauties of Ludlow. Her face was a fine oval, with a fair skin, pearly everywhere except in the slight pink of her cheek. Her forehead was of a pure marble-white, firm and of noble intellectual form. The eyebrows were black, and so were the long lashes, and the dove-like eyes beneath the delicate lids. The nose was aquiline and finely chiselled, the lips bright-tinted, small and thin, carrying in them firmness and decision of character. To see Heloise de Lossy, in a white dress, with a straw hat, and long chamois-leather gloves, tending her garden, was to see a picture bright and ravishing as ever painter conceived.

It was a May morning. After a shower the mother and daughter were at their graceful work in the garden when the postman looked over the hedge.

"A letter!" cried Mademoiselle de Lossy, throwing down her trowel and running to the gate.

"Yes Mamsel," said the postman, "from London."

She glanced at the address as she tripped back to her mother.

"From Miss Jobson!"

"Ah! *voilà*. It is time!" said Madame with just a little shadow over her lively face. "Let us go into the porch and read it."

In the porch on either side were two seats, where mother and daughter were soon ensconced. Heloise read:

“ 15, *Arlington Street, London,*
“ *May 10th, 18—.*

“ DEAREST HELOÏSE,

“How long it is since I have written to you! I have been busy beyond description. Taddy and I have left our room in the Temple and come to live here with Sir Harry Jobson. The dear old Elm Court rookery is broken up, and Taddy has taken chambers in ‘Pump Court;’ is it not a horrid name? There he will be at work every day from ten to four, except when the Courts are sitting at Westminster or when he goes on Circuit. He is getting to be quite well known in the literary and political world. His last letters in the ‘Examiner’ have excited great attention, and some of our friends are predicting all sorts of honours for him. Even our grave friend Mr. Winnistoun, of whom I have spoken to you so often, says in his quiet way, ‘The boy begins to climb. May he keep his wind and strength.’ For you know Taddy is very energetic and goes into everything with tremendous energy. Moreover he has had a little triumph in a case in the Queen’s Bench, which he held in the absence of Mr. Serjeant Crisp.”

Heloise laid the letter down a moment and glanced at her mother with a blush of happiness and with sparkling eyes. The mother looked back with a gratified expression.

“Yes,” said she in French. “It is a *garçon* of promise. He is of those who conquer for themselves great names.”

“There is no one like him,” said Heloïse with enthusiasm. “So good, so pure, so earnest, so intelligent. He is the perfection of a simple, noble English character!”

The mother, as Heloïse spoke with this flush and sparkle of feeling, seemed to be struck by a sudden chill. She gazed at her daughter, caught her breath with one hand on her bosom, and the other she laid on that of her child.

“*Allons, mon enfant!*” she said. “But why dost thou talk with such emotion of this young gentleman? Heloïse, my child, for some reason this warmth of feeling sends through my heart a pang. He has never spoke to thee, my

child? never avowed anything? never written to thee? Of course he could not have done it—thou wouldst have told me.”

Heloïse, who at first had been looking at her mother's face, had while she proceeded dropped her head and eyes, and folded her trembling hands, and her cheek had grown scarlet. As the warm blood rushed up under the fine transparent skin, her grand rich beauty struck her mother with admiration.

“Has he?” insisted Madame de Lossy.

“Never,” said Heloïse in a low voice.

“Think then my child what thou art doing! Thou—thou may'st be cherishing visions and hopes destined but to be crushed. Certainly he was intimate. What more does Miss Jobson write?”

Heloïse took up the letter and went on reading in a low agitated tone.

“We now see so much of society. For a middle-aged woman like me to begin to grow so gay is rather singular. Taddy goes everywhere, especially among the Whig political coteries. On the other hand Sir Harry Jobson is a Tory and we see many of that side. To tell you the truth, though of course a woman has very little to do with politics, I sympathise most with Taddy. By the way a most romantic thing occurred to him at Rome, when he was there in the winter with the General. A carriage and pair ran away with a gentleman and his daughter, and Taddy at great risk stopped the horses, getting a few bruises. It turned out that the gentleman was a rich county banker, a widower, and the daughter, who is a delicate but very agreeable-looking girl, is his sole heiress. I am told she will be worth fifteen or twenty thousand a year. The banker is a Member of Parliament and a very shrewd clever man highly respected by his party, which happens to be Whig. He has taken an immense fancy to Taddy, and . . .”

Here the face of Heloïse became white as death—her head drooped like a lily—her hands fell and the letter dropped from her flaccid fingers. Madame de Lossy, with her quick French movement was just in time to prevent her daughter from falling to the ground. She called loudly for

help, and the natty maid ran out and with strong arms helped to carry the young lady into the dining room and to lay her on the sofa. In a few minutes, with burnt feathers, cold water and a little *cognac*, Mademoiselle Heloïse was brought round. When she opened her eyes her mother was standing in the window with the letter in her hand.

She was reading the remainder.

" to tell you the truth in my opinion she likes Taddy very much, and Mr. Childerley seems to encourage it. Whether T. reciprocates of course I am quite unable to say, *though I fancy he does*. I was wishing and hoping so much that when the season was over we could get away to Ludlow for a few weeks, to have seen you and your mother, and to enjoy the exquisite, dear soft, sweet landscape, and the quiet charm of its life, but Mr. Childerley insists on our going down to Yorkshire, where he has a fine hall and estate not far from Castle Howard, one of the noblest places in England. The old gentleman talks also of introducing Taddy to a small constituency, where he, Mr. Childerley, has immense influence. No one can say what may not come of this. I shall go with Taddy—the General proposing to visit some old Indian friends in Devonshire. So, dearest Heloïse, unless you will consent to come up to London in the winter, I fear it may be a long time yet before we shall see each other again. Taddy and I often speak of the delightful months we spent together at Ludlow,—and he is never tired of expressing his gratitude to you and Madame de Lossy for the French conversations which have made him so accomplished at French, and have been of infinite use to him on the Continent "

Madame de Lossy threw the letter on the ground with a gesture of anger.

" *Voilà !* " she cried in a sharp and strident voice, her emotion being strong, " these cold and selfish English, how they write ! She thinks the money they paid for their lessons, entitles her nephew to trifle with us ! They stick a dagger in your heart as a surgeon does a lancet into your skin, and without even an acknowledgment of a sense of the pain they are inflicting ! "

She crossed her arms and walked up and down the room with hurried and agitated steps.

"Go!" she said at length to the maid, with an imperious gesture.

Sally Lunn, the maid, curtsied—as maids were wont to do in those days not so far back, whenever they were addressed by their mistresses. Who shall say that in doing so they were less dignified and independent than the frumps who in these times stand up to their employers with such graceless irreverence? She left the room.

Heloïse, her dark hair unbound and falling in rich profusion over her shoulder and on the floor, lay back. Her fine eyes were filled with tears.

"*O ma fille, ma fille!*"

The mother knelt beside the sofa and threw her soft arms round the girl, and kissed her with all the passionate warmth of her southern nature.

Heloïse did not answer: she suffered the caress without any movement.

"Ah!" cried Madame de Lossy, rising, with a dark shadow over her dark face and a haughty anger in her eyes, "This is love from the *canaille!* Lord Cainham, who is so stiff and correct, is after all of the aristocrats, if but by one remove. It was hardly worth while to discourage *him* for this man, who trifles and does not know whether he loves or not. *Bien!* we shall see. You suffer now, my child, but your day will come."

"O mamma!" said Heloïse, sitting up and drying her tears, "I want no revenge. Is it not we both perhaps that have been deceiving ourselves? Bertha is so good, so loving, so sincere, she can have suspected nothing, felt nothing—or she would not have written as she has. I never breathed a hint to her. You know how gentle she is—it would be impossible for her knowingly to wound my heart."

Madame shrugged her shoulders.

"Possibly, *ma fille*—but did *he* suppose that our familiar relations with him here were the ordinary intercourse of friendship?"

"He must have done—he is incapable of an ignoble act."

"Cease to speak of him Heloïse!" cried Madame de

Lossy. "It is over : a dream I had cherished
I blot it out from memory. It shall never be. Heloïse
you will not answer that letter of the Miss Jobson. Bah !
the very name is ignoble and unworthy of the lips of a de
Lossy. We will soon go to London, my child. It is time
for you to see something of the world, and it is a long time
that I have treasured the means to enable me to do justice
to your birth when the hour should arrive. It is arrived.
We shall meet again these people on terms more equal."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A STRANGE CLIENT.

THE rooms in Elm Court were dismantled. It was in Arlington Street that Lord Swallowtail and his sisters, and Lord Cainham and his mother, and any other fashionable intimates who had been wont to climb up towards the skies that grimy way, now sought Miss Jobson, while Mr. Thaddæus Jobson's name was up at Number Five Pump Court. There, in company with Mr. Throgmorton Bracton, a young barrister like himself, he occupied the set of chambers on the second floor at the left, and shared with his friend, besides the rooms, the use of the sharp youth who sat in the clerk's room, and was long engaged in the lazy labour of waiting to see which of the gentlemen would get the first brief. This young person had, by every means known to him, endeavoured to consult the oracles of the future, as to that important point. He had repeatedly cut up pieces of paper and drawn them from his hat, distributed over and over again a dirty pack of cards, tossed up pennies—"heads" Mr. Jobson—"tails" Mr. Bracton; but with such an unvarying variety of success, that he had been driven to the conclusion that the chances "was very good for Mr. Jobson, and just as good for Mr. Bracton." Jobson however won, by the receipt of a guinea fee for drawing a small declaration in slander, and the clerk's mind was set at ease.

The young gentleman was named Timpany, commonly called at the Inns and at Westminster "Tenpenny." He was a sharp youth, with his hair cut as close as it conveniently could be. It was of a reddish brown colour: his eyebrows had a strong tendency to yellow; his little sharp eyes were brown: he had a Jewish-shaped nose

and fresh-coloured cheeks. For his age, which was fourteen, he was small, but no more active urchin existed in the Temples. He had been "junior" to the clerk to the late Attorney-General Sir Thomas Factotum, a Mr. Wilford, *doyen* of the Common Law Clerks. In this situation Master Tenpenny had earned a reputation for quickness and address which promised extremely well for his clerical future. Tenpenny had been recommended by his senior, to select our hero, among several competitors for his services, on the ground that in his, Mr. Wilford's, estimation "Mr. Jobson was a promising man and would get a judgeship." Tenpenny, after spending a few weeks with Mr. Jobson at Number Five, confirmed this opinion, and at the chop house in Whitefriars, frequented by the Temple clerks, he offered to bet two to one on it—in bobs. Jobson, on the other hand, although he had now and then caught his clerk upon the stairs engaged in active hostilities, or an exchange of injurious language, with other junior clerks from above or below, found Tenpenny a clever and attentive youth, doing credit to Mr. Wilford's training.

Jobson's attendance at his chambers, at the Courts, and on Circuit was most exemplary, but as yet Master Tenpenny, had been able to enter only that solitary guinea, in the quarto volume in which he had invested on behalf of his master, to be used as a "fee-book." No more business-like visitor appeared than Winnistoun, or Lord Cainham, or the General, who now and then came in, or than Bertha Jobson, who liked at times to go down and look round upon the books with their sheepskin faces, and fancy what wondrous law was to come out of them, when Taddy's chance came.

For Jobson now worked hard. He was reading up for a technical essay on the difficult subject of pleading, and in addition he was writing a series of political papers on "Privilege in England," which Winnistoun thought would create a great sensation. In addition to this he went through a great deal of gaiety—attending several dining clubs, at which he mixed with the wits and thinkers of the day—political drawing-rooms to which he was invited on the Whig side of politics because of his liberal views,

and on the Tory side through the influence of his uncle and Lord Cainham. He had been presented to Lord Mewbourne, who afterwards professed himself to be vividly struck by our hero's manner and talk, as well as by his appearance, and drily told Swallowtail "that he had no doubt they would find Mr. Jobson a very useful fellow, especially with the help of that charming aunt of his:" a remark that made Lord Swallowtail's pink face become a fiery red. Mr. Childerley had taken an opportunity of speaking about Jobson to Lord Mewbourne, at the same time giving the Premier a hint that it was not impossible the young gentleman might become his son-in-law, a hint that (in Lord Mewbourne's estimation) lifted our hero a good many pegs higher than all his vigour and ease of intellect, for Mr. Childerley's money-bags naturally counted with a Whig aristocrat above wisdom or intelligence, which are very vulgar and commonplace things and may be found running to seed in the lowest radical circles.

It was in this stage of Jobson's affairs, and early in the sunny month of June, when the season was at its height, that Master Timpany one day stuck his head in at the door of Jobson's chamber, and said,

"A lady, sir, in the clerk's room: wants to see you."

"A lady? Not Miss Jobson?"

"Oh no, sir—Tall person, sir, with black hair and eyes and eyebrows—powder, sir—and——"

"A double chin and gold eye-glasses perhaps. Haven't I told you, before, I don't want you to give me a portrait of my visitors? Have you not asked her name?"

"O yes, sir! But she says she won't give her name. It's private business—maybe breach of promise?" said Master Tenpenny putting his head wisely on one side.

"In that case, I am not a solicitor, Master Timpany, and your conjecture is wasted. Try again."

"Well, sir—she ain't a lady," said the clerk. "I mean noways like Miss Jobson—she is painted like a May Queen, sir——"

"Permit me!" said a peremptory voice, as a hand pushed back the door, nearly knocking over Master Timpany, who was standing with his back to it, the handle

in his hands, and wholly unprepared for the vigour of the action : and in walked a lady, rather above middle height, with a large hat and feather, a handsome silk mantle and petticoat, and a gilt-headed cane. She drew herself up and looked at Jobson, who had mechanically risen and bowed. He recognised her immediately.

"I thought," she said with a somewhat forced little laugh, "that I might save any further waste of time with regard to my unimportant identity by walking in and showing myself. Do you recognise me, Monsieur Jobson?"

"Perfectly, Madame—and am surprised to see you. To what am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

"To your uncle, sir," she said putting her head on one side and ogling Jobson. "Not that you are not an attraction in yourself, sir!" She curtseyed and smiled.

"Is this boy to be the witness of our interview, sir? I have some family matters to go into."

The woman's bright eyes were piercing Jobson through and through, and he was very uncomfortable, though he did his best to conceal it.

He ordered Timpany to leave the room, an injunction that young gentleman obeyed by shutting the door and immediately applying his ear to the keyhole.

It was the woman of the *café*.

Jobson motioned to her to take a chair. She untied her hat-strings, and threw herself into a seat with an easy—a horribly easy air. His blood curdled as he looked at her. She seemed to fascinate him with her brilliant eye.

"Would you not be seated Mr. Nephew?" she said.

This coolness woke up Jobson.

"Excuse me, Madam," he said fixing his grey eye on her with a cold, keen glance that showed her she had to deal with no mere infant, and warned her that she had drawn far enough on his forbearance. "In my own rooms I am in the habit of consulting my own convenience. As our interview is, I hope, to be of the shortest, I may choose, if you will permit me, to stand."

"As you please, sir," she said trying to be easy under Jobson's steady gaze. "I have come to you, sir, in preference to going directly to your uncle, on whom I have some very

strong claims. I am now living in London: I know his residence, his circumstances, his family relations and his clubs. I also know, as you perceive, his nephew's chambers." She tried to smile, but Jobson kept his eye coldly fixed upon her, and the smile died away; a flush of anger came into her face.

"You are a lawyer, Mr. Jobson. It will be necessary for me, before I come to the point, to inform you of certain events which occurred a long time ago in India."

"Stay!" said Jobson. "If you propose to inform me of the unhappy relations once existing between Sir Harry Jobson and you, you may save yourself the trouble. I am perfectly acquainted with the facts."

"Oho! the nephew is father confessor to the uncle! Very well, sir, I am saved considerable trouble. Sir Harry Jobson is now in society, his sister I believe also shares his honours"—her look was malicious and deadly—"and his nephew is, I am told, a promising barrister, a successful author, and a political celebrity. These are great advantages—the results of high character, I presume—unblemished reputation and that sort of thing—which I, an outsider, can appreciate—if I cannot *exactly* enjoy."

She shrugged her shoulders.

A chill went through Jobson's heart. The woman's astounding coolness, her brazen face and manner were beyond his understanding. He said mechanically,

"I do not observe, Madam, the relevancy of these remarks."

"Well, sir, you do yourself an injustice as a lawyer. I shall be able very soon to show it. The association of the name of General Sir Harry Jobson with my history can hardly be of any benefit to him or you or——"

"Stay!" shouted Jobson with deep anger, holding up his hand. "Stay, woman! Do not allude even distantly to one too pure to have her name mentioned by your lips. I have borne with you thus far—but let me warn you. I understand what you wish to convey. You are on a dangerous errand. Do not go too far, or I shall certainly take the means the law affords me of silencing you."

"Spare your threats, sir. We are alone. I warn you

that you have to deal with a determined, I may say, a desperate person—and you and your uncle shall suffer—or bleed—‘bleed,’ sir, in the vulgar sense. I came to you sir, before going to a solicitor with these papers.” She drew a bundle from a reticule she carried with her. “They constitute a case which at all events Sir Harry Jobson shall have an opportunity of meeting.”

“Pshaw, Madam,” said Jobson, recovering his composure, and calmly regarding the woman with a supercilious glance, “These events took place in India fifteen years ago. There are ‘statutes of limitation’—”

“Ay, sir!” she said, in a loud voice, rising from her chair and angrily facing him, “limitation of legal claims—but there is no limitation of revenge and exposure. I see I have come *here* on a fool’s errand; I will go and consult my adviser, sir, again. I believe you know him,” she said with emphasis. Jobson did not understand it.

“Excuse me!” said Jobson, going to the door and leaning with his back against it. “You have reminded me that characters are at stake, and the happiness and dignity of others. I may have been unjust, though you must own your own language has not been conciliatory. Perhaps you did not intend the wickedness I suspected. Perhaps now, after so many years of—of sorrow—of evil—for which I throw no stones at you, I who am myself so frail—you wish the means to redeem the past—you are only desirous to be helped to do so. You may long for opportunity of repentance.”

His eye was so keen, and his voice so thrilling and earnest, that the woman, for a minute, shrank and dropped upon the chair, and opened her fan and quickly passed it a few times before her face. Then she turned and looked at him with a little laugh.

“Ah no, sir!” she said shrugging her shoulders in that French manner of hers, “I fear I am not in train for repentance. Unfortunately, there has been for many years a little *refroidissement* between me and God.”

He looked at her appalled. Her voice, her air, her manner were perfectly icy and calm. Her bright eye never wavered while he looked, and all the while in

each movement of hand or shoulder there was deliberate artifice.

"Great Heaven!" he exclaimed. "How are such creatures made?"

"Made, sir?" she exclaimed bitterly. "They are made by circumstances—and mostly by you *men*!"

She bent her eyes on the floor with a smile on her face.

Jobson's heart was smitten by these words. They revealed so much to him. He remembered Harry Jobson's confession, and his remorse. He could understand something about it now, when he looked at this woman: and yet her acts, her words, her horrible, cold cynicism and want of principle, were, as he felt, not all chargeable to his uncle.

"Mrs. ——?" he said, addressing her.

"Hildyard," she said. "I have found it convenient to adopt that name for the present."

"Mrs. Hildyard,—I assume you wish to apply through me to my uncle for some assistance?"

"For the present, Mr. Jobson—I am in need. I must pay my rent to-morrow or turn out. Hereafter I wish to have an interview, here perhaps, with your uncle ——?"

"For my uncle I can promise nothing," said Jobson firmly. "I must refer your request to him. I will, if you please, act as the medium of communication. But for the moment, if you are in want, I am able myself to supply you. How much is necessary? Will twenty pounds relieve you?"

She glanced at him hesitatingly, and some gentle feeling passed into her eyes for a moment, instantly passing out again.

"It is all I will now ask of you, sir. You are generous."

Jobson took out his cheque-book, and drew a cheque to "bearer" for twenty pounds. He touched the bell.

Master Timpany answered with surprising alacrity.

"Cash this cheque," he said to the boy.

"Oh! pray, sir,"—cried the woman—"do not put yourself to that trouble. I will engage to do it myself—since you are so kind. Shall I give you a receipt?"

Jobson, without answering, placed the cheque in her hands. She put it in the reticule.

"I thank you, sir—and will—for the present—with your kind permission—say—good morning."

She curtseyed twice, and went out, Timpany shaking his head after her, and grinding his teeth as he shut the door.

"Twenty pounds, Ma'am," he said to himself. "A year's wages."

He had shut the door upon her, and was leaning out of the window to see her emerge from the staircase into the Court, when Jobson's bell summoned him.

"Timpany—do you think you could follow that lady without being seen, and find out where she lives?"

"O yes sir, rather," cried Timpany.

"And can you keep a secret, sir?"

Timpany opened his small eyes very wide, and flushed up.

"If I promise, I can, sir."

"Then promise," said Jobson. "There's a guinea for you."

Timpany put his hands behind his back.

"My wages are twenty pound a year, sir, and the clerk's fees. I don't want no tips, sir, please. The lady'll be getting away, sir."

"True. She has gone to Childs's Bank. Follow her there. Come back and tell me as soon as you have found out where she lives."

Timpany darted down the staircase, and out into Temple Lane, with all the eagerness of a ferret and the importance of a detective.



"I don't want no tips, sir, please."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

BOPPS'S.

UP Wych Street, with its narrow dirty pavements, its foul and dingy shops, its smoke-stained windows, its mud-spattered walls and shutters ; up Drury Lane, by the drinking-houses, and the old-clothes shops, the evil-looking-entries to evil-looking alleys, with life of all ages, and in tatters standing, and cheyving, and cursing about ; past the great ugly Theatre, through Covent Garden, and on to a narrow lane, with two high taverns guarding the entrance to its narrow defile, which looked like a way leading on to hell, went the gay-looking woman, followed by Timpany. A narrow way, we said—that led not to life eternal. Misery looked out of the doors and windows and paraded the narrow footwalks and stumbled about in the mud of the narrow cartway. This was a bog of black mud, where in the uneven depressions gathered pools of pitchy looking slime. Rags, bits of crockery, paper, oyster shells, dead cabbage-leaves, turnip-tops, bones, and occasionally the remains of cats, over all which tramped the great city life and wheeled the great city traffic ; for Crook Street was a thoroughfare and a short cut from East to West, and furthermore was a favourite market alley and standing-place for the dismal neighbourhood. What was it to Crook Street, that genius and nobleness and charity had often trodden its pavements ? They had passed through, wrapping their skirts about them, shutting their eyes, holding their noses ; and Crook Street remained as it was, a sewer of life, uncleansed and uncleanable. Most weekdays there were to be seen anchored in the stodgy mud along the south side of the street, the hand-carts of itinerant costermongers vending second-hand Covent Garden wares, from rotting cabbages to ancient

dried-up cocoa-nuts, or perhaps in summer-time soft hot-house pineapples with a dozen doses of cholera in each over-ripened cone: hard turnips, withering turnip-tops, shrivelled rhubarb-stalks, brocoli, with strings enough in their hardy stumps to form a rope to hang the eater, drooping flowers, decayed fruits, all those things at which high noses had turned up, and high stomachs had risen, now set out there on the rickety barrows as attractively as might be for the benefit of people whose noses and stomachs had long lost the delicacy of refinement. A wonderful place truly in the middle of the splendid metropolis. If he did not mind smells and jolting from the "common people," the elegant loiterer might have stayed his steps and examined the shops and the scene, for it was a busy one and worth a look. There was the butcher's with its repulsive rows of animals hanging round inside, at which hungry human carnivora would gather, and look with eager eyes and watering mouths: joints cut up and ready decorated the front; on the board in the open window were displayed cheap titbits—the chips, the remains, the offal almost of the good-man's carvings, over which dirty, pale-looking women with a few coppers in their hands, and sadly empty baskets eagerly chattered with the sharp lad, or the sharper and more heartless daughter of the flesher: there was the baker's, with its piles of heavy loaves, heavy to eat, and light to buy, its stodgy cakes, and lumpy buns, its fly-specked dried-up sponge-cakes, its three-cornered pastry flecked with dirty sugar and its open "fruit tarts," the grime and dust settling steadily on everything and flavouring it with a fine metropolitan fog and smoke flavour.

There was always a crowd in Crook Street, a curious, mixed, ragged, dirty, unhealthy-looking crowd, slouching along, eagerly peering through the mud-spattered windows, or canvassing with considerable freedom and much noise the quality of the dropping vegetables, or chattering over casual bargains offered by casual vendors of varieties who had strolled into the street in search of customers.

You wondered where they came from those figures—such figures! Good heavens! how dismal and heart-striking—clad, or let us rather say hung with dirty remnants and

patchwork chances of garment ; like that woman, whom God made for lines of beauty, and brightness and glory of form, and gentleness of life—to be seen there in specimen, with the brown skirts of her frowsy gown hitched up in careless bundle, all frayed and torn, and the big slatternly half-boots run down at heel and splitting at the toes, her hair fouled and ruffled, her right eye set in a ring of black and blue, who exchanged rough jokes, garnished with curses, with the costermonger, or winked saucily at that gentleman with one boot, a broken old hat very much on one side, and some patched relics of a man's clothing in some way or other strung about him, standing by with his hands in the holes at the sides of his trousers, a curious spectator of other people's bargains, since he was not in condition to drive any for himself.

Into this street plunged the gay lady.

On the right-hand side, going westwards, was a shop of dingy aspect, but for the neighbourhood of some pretensions. It had a large front-window filled with old and new boots. In the narrow doorway stood a rack filled with second-hand boots. On projecting poles, reminding one sadly of the gallows, hung long, thick, coarse, heavy-soled boots. On the hooks which had been driven into the wooden pillars or mullions of the shop-front, were suspended bundles of shoes and slippers. The scent of leather and of blacking emanated from the shop and advised you of its neighbourhood long before you saw it.

Over the door, in tarnished gilt characters inscribed upon a ground of black, could be made out by a sharp-eyed person the name, "Bopps." But on this notice Bopps had evidently found it inadvisable to rely. For above, across the front of the house, between the cornice of the shop-window and the sills of the windows of the first floor, stretched a huge sign, with the following words painted in bright white letters on a vermillion ground :—

YES! THIS IS BOPPSES!

There was no doubt therefore admissible in the mind of any sane person that this was the shop of Bopps. Any light, incredulous thinker inclined to question "the eternal verities," and to deny the existence of Bopps or of his shop or of the relations between Bopps and this shop, any one disposed to hazard the assertion that this was "Smith's" or "Brown's," was in a bold decisive manner refuted by this notable inscription. Bopps, moreover, was a philologist before his age. He defied Lindley Murray and anticipated Latham. He used the old English genitive. He would not condescend to the apostrophe in his genitives though he apostrophised his shop in the never-to-be-traversed affirmation "Yes! this is Boppses!"

Who could have been the guilty individual who ever doubted that this was Bopps's?

That was a problem of the day.

Every one living in the street, every one in the neighbourhood, the passers-by for thirty years, had seen the boots and shoes and the old sign, all evidences that this was Bopps's. No one ever knew why, ever learned the name of the daring agnostic who had challenged the identity of Bopps's, but one day, men were seen picking their way through the mud of Crook Street, carrying on their shoulders a huge signboard. They drew up opposite Bopps's: they raised ladders: they set to work with great deliberation and many exciting incidents, to elevate the great sign to its place above Bopps's shop window; amid admiring and not a few critical observations from the crowd which immediately collected. Then they knocked up and established in its place for ever that bold affirmative of Bopps, that this shop, beyond all doubt or cavil, was and continued to be Bopps's.

The mode of expression was possibly characteristic of the man. It was not an angry reply to a questioning impertinent. It was a goodnatured assertion, rather of an encouraging tone to the inquirer.

"Yes! my friend," Bopps seemed to say, "you are inquiring whether this is Bopps's, and probably from your ignorance are disposed to hesitate about believing it, but pluck up your courage, you are right,—this *is* Bopps's."

The sign seemed to indicate that every one was presumed to want to know where Bopps's was. If you needed a pair of boots either new or second-hand, where on earth could you have thought of going for them, except to Bopps's? That question Bopps never thought of arguing. He took it for granted that every one must be asking whether *this* was Bopps's? And he gave notice that it was.

The gay-looking lady turned in at Bopps's.

Bopps's house was an old, and a large, and a high one. It had been in Queen Anne's time a coffee-house, frequented by wits and men out of their wits. The shop entrance was on one side and the house entrance on the other side of the shop-front. It was at the house entrance that the woman went in. The fine lady went up the dark narrow passage and the narrow stairs, with their patched and ragged drugget, her stick sounding the numbers as she mounted.

Tenpenny, who had seen her enter, reconnoitred the house. He passed on the opposite side and there was not a pane in the establishment from top to bottom that escaped his sharp little eyes. He crossed over and examined the boots in the window, and looked in at the doorway which happened at the moment to be filled in by Mr. Bopps himself. Mr. Bopps, though not an ill-natured man was in the habit of cheyving little boys. Tenpenny's decent clothes and clean face and alert look at once excited the shoemaker's curiosity. Tenpenny was not the sort of a boy who usually lounged round shop windows in that neighbourhood.

"Hallo! sir, wot har *you* lookin' after? Eh! You passed hon the other side just now, hand now you're lookin' my stock all over like a bailiff. Wot's yer bisness, young man?"

Master Tenpenny was up to time.

"Have you got a pair of cheap shoes, sir, that would do for an office?"

"'Ave I got a pair o' cheap shoes young man that would do for a hoffice? I've got hundereds on 'em that would do for the Queen's drawin' room," said Mr. Bopps hitching up the leathern girdle that bound his leathern apron.

"But you see I don't want 'em for the Queen's drawing room," said Master Tenpenny saucily eyeing Mr. Bopps

who, in his estimation, wanted taking down, and must be taken down accordingly. "I want 'em for an office."

Bopps, who wore large-rimmed spectacles, looked sharply at the youth, but decided not to be offended.

"Well, sir, walk in and you shall 'ave 'em for a hoffice hif that's your will."

And into the shop went Tenpenny. Inside there, earth and sky were boots. The ceiling was hung with boots; the shelves were piled with boots and shoes; the floor was strewn with them: the air was pervaded with a leathery, waxy, smell.

"Now, Master," said Mr. Bopps, "'ave the goodness to seat yourself hon that chair, han' Miss Bopps shall hattend to you. Hangelina!"

At this summons, from the dark interior of an inner shop, emerged a young lady, with a torn upper in her hand which she had been engaged in mending.

"Hattend to this young gen'leman" said Mr. Bopps magnificently, "Pair o' hoffice slippers."

And Mr. Bopps resumed his place in the doorway filling it up with his ample form and stopping nearly all the light that could struggle into the place.

Mr. Bopps was short and chubby, though of a pale-dirty or perhaps, to put it more accurately, yellow-leathery complexion: Mrs. Bopps was short and chubby and so far as could be judged from examination of her outward habiliments of exactly the same contour as her husband, but the chubbiness of her cheeks was brilliant with a fine ruddy glow: and Miss Bopps was short and chubby, with small bright blue eyes, and a rufescent complexion, and a lively manner and action.

Tenpenny, who could just manage to make her out in the uncertain light, very much preferred her to her father. When she addressed him he grinned at her: and when she kneeled down to measure his size he winked at her, and grinned again. She tossed her curls, and put a finger up in silent warning. Tenpenny thereupon threw his arms round her neck and kissed her.

He was an advanced student of human nature. She struggled and uttered a stifled cry.



Jeppethy Lucknow put his arm round her neck and kissed her.

"What did you say, Hangelina?" inquired Mr. Bopps turning round, and glaring through his spectacles into the shop.

Angelina, who had jumped up with a bright crimson flush over her face, coughed violently.

"Nothin' father—*ugh, ugh!*"

Tenpenny pretended to cough too. The old man turned his back to them again.

"Himpudence!" said Miss Bopps in a whisper, when she came back with a pair of slippers. She threw them down in a temper, and motioned to Mr. Tenpenny to try them on.

"You put 'em on, beauty!" said Mr. Tenpenny in low voice and with an engaging leer.

She shook her head violently, and Tenpenny had to put them on for himself.

At this moment, Mr. Bopps seeing something that needed adjusting outside the shop, stepped outside.

"Himpudence!" repeated Miss Bopps, this time out loud.

"Don't be hard on a young 'un," said Tenpenny winking, "I couldn't help it—you're a prime girl!"

"'Old your nonsense, young man, hand fit on yer slippers. Hi've a good mind to tell father, an' I tell you hif I was to he'd box your ears well."

"*Don't!*" cried Tenpenny, with his head on one side, "or I won't come again."

"I don't care."

"Yes you do now. I say though—look here, do you take in lodgers?"

"Wot bisness his that o' yours?"

"Nothing, only I saw a handsome lady go in at your door just now."

"Wich?" cried Miss Bopps off her guard.

"I don't know," replied Tenpenny. "So you have two fine ladies, eh? My eye! This was a tall one with a hat and feather and a walking-stick."

"Oh! yes, the second floor! The hother's bad to-day. *She've* come back 'ave she? I 'ope she's brought her footin' as she promised she would. She ain't paid a farthin' since the day she come."

"Well," said Tenpenny, incautiously, "she has enough to pay you now any way."

"'Ow do you know, young man?" asked the girl quickly.

At this moment Mr. Bopps re-entered the shop, and called out :

"Wot Hangelina ; you hain't managed to fit that there young man with shoes yet? Let *me* see habout it."

"Yes, sir!" said Tenpenny standing up, "it's all right, and I'll call for them on my way home to-night at six o'clock." He winked at Miss Bopps.

"You'd better pay for 'em now," cried the proprietor. "We don't want to 'ave hall our trouble for nothing."

"Not until I get the shoes," said Mr. Tenpenny firmly buttoning up his jacket. "Good-bye Miss. *O revoyer!* I'll come back safe enough, old leather apron!" and he ran out of the shop. Bopps, in a rage, rushed to the door, but Tenpenny was far away.

Miss Bopps deemed it discreet not to tell her father what had passed between her and Mr. Tenpenny. She was very curious to know who this forward and mysterious boy was ; and, putting things together, she came to the conclusion that he had followed their lodger home and must know something about her. Moreover she had an idea that he really would come back again. Miss Bopps was only seventeen years of age, though no chicken in intelligence. She determined to find out for herself, and at once, whether the good news the boy had given was correct. She ascended the stairs, knocked at the door, and, as her manner was, entered before any answer was given. Mrs. Hildyard was at the moment changing her dress, but Angelina's quick eyes immediately discovered on the table, beside the watch and chain, a little heap of gold. She curtsied to the lady with a mock-humble mien.

"O ma'am I was not haware you 'ad come back. His there hanythink I can get you, ma'am, hif you please?"

The lady's sharp black eyes looked at Angelina, causing her to blush, and she said :

"I did *not* want you—but as you are here you may take that down and bring me back a receipt." She tossed a couple of guineas across the table, and turned again to look

at herself in the wretched little mirror perched on the high chest of drawers.

Miss Bopps was now certain that the young man knew something about her lodger. She resolved to be on the look-out for him in the evening. Meantime, in descending the stairs she stopped and knocked at a door on the first floor, admitting herself as before without invitation. The door opened into a front "parlour," the large room of the old coffee-house. A worn and dirty carpet, a wall-paper dim with smoke, and some rickety old Queen Anne furniture which it would be a waste of time to describe, made up the aspect and contents of this room. Ancient and shaky double doors never again by any ingenuity of carpenter or joiner to have their warped edges brought together in close-fitting embrace, divided the front room from the back, a bedroom where an antique, veneered, but much-chipped mahogany bedstead, with a vast canopy and some dreary hangings, two walnut chairs, a painted deal washstand and two strips of frayed and ill-used carpet, constituted the movables. These were Bopps's "best" apartments.

On a dilapidated sofa in the front room, as Miss Bopps entered, lay a lady, covered with a dirty quilt and a cloak, her head lying on a bed-pillow. Her face was pale but agreeable, her hair had fallen and showed a fine brown of great length and beauty. She seemed ill, and turned with frightened, anxious glance toward the door.

"La! Mrs. Skirrow!" cried Miss Bopps. "'Ow pale you do look! a'most like death. Cheer up, ma'am, ain't 'ee at 'ome?"

"He's not at home, Angy, if you mean Mr. Skirrow."

"Look yere, ma'am," said Angelina, "do you know what *she've* done?" pointing to the ceiling, towards Mrs. Hildyard's room. "She've paid up honest—and she've got a 'eap of gold."

Emily Skirrow, *née* Latouche, for it was she, partly raised herself and clasped her hands.

"She has got some money, you say?"

"Yes, see them two suvrins. She've ever so many. I 'ope Mr. Skirrow will be has lucky soon," said Miss Bopps.

"I like you, ma'am, and I don't want you to go away—but mar says she can't 'ave 'er best rooms a goin' on like this for weeks and weeks and nothin' acomin' hov it."

"See here," cried Emily, holding up a pale thin hand and arm, on which there glittered a gold chain bracelet with some stones in it, a snake's head with ruby eyes and a brilliant in the centre of the head, "take this if you must. It is all that is left."

"Hsssh!" cried Miss Bopps, drawing down Emily's sleeve, running to the door and shutting it, "Don't you go hand wisper a word habout it—mar and par couldn't stand seein' it without 'avin it—you'll want it for wot's ha comin'—no, no, Mrs. Skirrow we hain't thieves, we hain't. Please let me put yer pillow comfortable ma'am : la! you're has thin has a skeleton!"

The invalid tried to smile, but the smile died on her dry, colourless lips. It was difficult to recognise in her the gay young coquette who, only a few years before, had been the star and beam of Taddy Jobson's horizon.

At this moment the door opened and with a noisy, swaggering step Mr. Tom Skirrow entered the room. His glass was in his eye, his hat, which sadly wanted brushing, was on one side, his short cane was in one hand, and the other hand was in his trousers pocket. He wore tight plaid pantaloons and gaiters, and thick shoes on his large feet.

"Well?" cried Emily, starting up and gazing anxiously in his face.

He said nothing, but shook his head and jerked his thumb in the direction of Angelina, as a hint that he did not wish to answer before her. Miss Bopps, whose ears were sharply trained, had waited to hear his reply. She guessed pretty keenly what the question meant. She glanced at Mr. Skirrow with her blue eyes and went out.

"'E're a got nothin'," she said to herself, as she descended to the shop. "Wot *will* mar and par say? It's seven weeks to-morrow. O my!"

Skirrow took off his hat, and threw himself into a chair in front of the large cheerless grate, with its broken top bar, its two rusty hobs, its ashy rubbish its sooty chimney-back, and its miserable bit of fire, framed in by a dirty, cracked,

and yellow mantelpiece, with a small bas-relief of Canova's Three Graces, in an oval on its plinth. There, tilting the chair back, his hands in his pockets, his glass in his eye, he sat staring, with an angry melancholy on his features.

The pair had been eight months in London. This was near the end of their seventh week at Bopps's. Their first lodging had been in Jermyn Street, St. James's. Their second in the eastern end of Duke Street. Their third in Craven Street, Strand, whence they had removed to their present quarters.

Mrs. Skirrow was an invalid. Indeed, Mrs. Bopps had complained that, "if she ad honly a knowed what the young lady hexpected, *she* (Mrs. Bopps) never would a took 'er hinto 'er 'ouse." Angelina however had taken a fancy to Emily Skirrow, who was the prettiest and most stylish and respectable lodger that had ever gone up Bopps's stairs; for the worthy tradesman and his wife, who charged very high prices for that neighbourhood, never troubled themselves about the occupation or the character of their lodgers so long as they paid up punctually and did not grumble too much. Emily had won the sympathy of Angelina by her delicate condition and pretty way of speaking.

"Well, Tom?" said Emily at last. "What have you done?"

"Nothing. I saw Mr. Silver—he says nothing is more difficult than to get on the press here: and besides that the style of my leaders is not English enough. Curse these English people, they are so priggish and precise! I wish I could introduce the freedom of the Canadian press into England for six months. I'd make a row!"

"How has *he* managed to do so well?" said Emily.

"Jobson?" Skirrow started and seemed to spit the word out of his mouth. "Why, because he had nothing to learn. He always was a prig, like his mother and all his family. You remember her with her haughty way and patronising airs—that's the reason why. I could get into their 'style,' as they call it, easily enough, if I only had enough to carry you through this and give me time to turn round. Mr. Silver told me too I required to make myself more intimately

acquainted with English politics. That I'll do if I can only pull through—and I'll pull through one way or another." He set his teeth determinedly and glared through his eye-glass at the scrap of fire.

"Do you know, I met *him*—to-day?" he added.

"No!"

"Yes, coming out of the *Chronicle* Office—he almost trod on my toes with his nose in the air, dressed in the height of fashion, with a handsome cloak over his shoulder and a silver-headed cane. He writes for the *Chronicle* and gets splendid pay for it. He's quite a big man now—there was an article on one of his letters in the *Post* yesterday."

Emily's eyes sparkled and she leaned on her arm.

"Well, Tom, you are a cleverer man than Taddy Jobson and you can beat him yet. Why don't you go on the other side and write against him? They may want somebody to do that."

Tom Skirrow let the two front legs of his chair drop on the ground and examined his wife through his glass.

"Clever idea!" he said. "But you see I have been trying the same side because just now it pays better. The Whigs have the best of it under the young Queen. But, by Jove, you may be right. What do I care at this moment which side is in as long as we can get bread and butter? I know from several fellows in the Covent Garden tavern that the Tories are very hard up for clever writers, and perhaps I can help them. Egad—I'll try it. But it will take time. I must find an introduction—and get up that side—and here meanwhile—"

He rose and walked uneasily about the room. Emily watched him with her bright eyes.

"There is only one thing," he said at last, looking sidewise at his wife. "We must raise money somehow. My watch, your watch, and the other things are gone—only that—that you know—is left."

"Everything is gone but that," said Emily sadly, "and you know what I am keeping it for. But I suppose it must go and we must take our chance. Do you know that that woman upstairs you talk to so much has got a lot of money?"

"Whew!" Tom Skirrow gave a long whistle, dropped his eyeglass out of his eye by an ugly movement of the muscles of his face, and gazed at Emily. "Mrs. Hildyard has a lot of money, has she? Then she has taken my advice and boarded the young puppy." Mr. Skirrow was never particular about his metaphors. He snapped his fingers and danced about the room. "By Jove! I didn't think he was such a fool."

"Have you been setting her at Taddy Jobson, Tom? How wicked you are!"

"Well, you heard her story—it was best to begin with him, and take the party in detail. Three strings to her bow counting the cracked old aunt—besides you were setting *me* at him just now."

"But this is positively disgraceful. I hate that woman, and don't want to have anything to do with her. It is a wholly different thing fighting a man in the newspapers, and robbing him through an adventuress."

"My dear Emily," said Skirrow resuming his seat, his eyeglass, and his manner, "you leave me to work out my own salvation, as old Troutbeck used to put it. I'm not going to starve when the man who has crossed my life at every turn, can be used to feed me. I have promised to help Mrs. Hildyard with my advice and she has promised to pay for it. I will just run up and bring her down to tell us what happened. The interview must have been an interesting one."

He left the room.

Emily Skirrow shuddered, grew faint, and sank down on the sofa, her hands over her eyes.

"I *am* punished!" she murmured. "Thrown over by my father and mother, tied to Tom Skirrow, detested by Taddy Jobson—who was a gentleman—and forced to be friendly with this horrible woman—Gracious heaven—forgive me and help me!"

The door opened and Mrs. Hildyard entered. She had exchanged her outdoor costume for a gaudy morning gown and an elaborate cap, both rather tarnished, and came sailing into the room with her arms crossed, followed by Skirrow, whose face was radiant. The woman was so large and loud

and patronising, and sharp : and there was something about her way of talking with Tom that made Emily shudder and shrink.

"Ah ! Mrs. Skirrow, how do you feel this morning ? Annoying, these little accidents of marriage, are they not ? Well, I have had a *tête-à-tête* with your old flame, a gentlemanly and very clever fellow, I can tell you—does credit to your taste."

Skirrow bit his lips and stirred the fire violently.

"Tell us all about it !" he cried. "By jove ! I had no idea he was such a ninny ! Capital."

Mrs. Hildyard told her story very well, with ample histrionic effect.

When she had done, Skirrow slapped his knee.

"You are a clever woman," he said, "and as for Jobson, he is an ass. He gave you a cheque to cash at his bankers. You cashed it yourself. You took care to show yourself at his bankers."

"O yes ! The clerk to whom I presented it went in for a junior partner to come out and satisfy himself of my identity. Of course he knew nothing about me, but I looked so respectable—or—perhaps there were other reasons," she said, casting a wicked glance at Tom Skirrow—"but he at once told them to pay me, and was very polite. All the clerks were peeping at me from behind the desks. Peeping Toms ! It was great fun !"

"Will they know you again ?" asked Skirrow.

"I should think so !"

"Good—first-rate ! This is not the last twenty pounds you will get out of Master Jobson, Mrs. Hildyard."

"No, I hope not, thanks to your clever advice, Mr. Skirrow. I must not be indebted to you for your valuable aid, which I am sure to want again. Permit me to discharge my obligation," and Mrs. Hildyard, opening her reticule, extracted five golden guineas, which she handed to Skirrow, who coolly pocketed it.

Emily bit her lip till the blood came, her face was in a flame.

"Always at your service Mrs. Hildyard. I was a lawyer in America and may yet become one here if I can only keep the wolf from the door."

Mrs. Hildyard, after some passages of lively banter with the gentleman, at length took leave of the poor wife, who had shown by her drooping air and steady silence, how little she appreciated her visitor's style of conversation.

"How *can* you?" exclaimed she when Mrs. Hildyard had left. "What a mean, low, contemptible business!"

"Hey! hey!" replied Mr. Skirrow. "Let me advise you to hold your tongue, *Madame*. Did I not tell you just now that I was resolved to get on one way or another? I have not come here to starve, and I shall not quarrel with any source of relief. I shall take everything that comes and use every wind that blows; I rather like your d—— squeamishness at this time of day." He took up his hat and went out in a huff. His steps turned to Covent Garden to a well-known tavern frequented by news writers and artists where he had picked up one or two acquaintances.

At six o'clock Miss Bopps, who had been looking into her glass, and had pressed her little curls over her finger till they looked like polished shavings, was keeping watch in the shop, while Mr. and Mrs. Bopps, in an inner sanctuary, very close and very damp, were sitting over a dish of tea, garnished with shrimps and watercress, and bread and butter. She took up and set down repeatedly the parcel of Mr. Tenpenny's slippers, but five minutes after six, ten minutes, quarter of an hour had passed before he appeared. He put his nose cautiously in at the door and took a survey before entering.

"O that's you?" she cried out.

"Yes, beauty, it's *me*!" he responded. "Where are those slippers, eh?"

"'Ere," she said, holding up the parcel. "And where's the money?"

"Hah! four bob. One, two, three, four! There you are, charmer. Now for a kiss." He made a dart at her.

"I'll scream hout, himperance," she said, "hif you don't leave hoff. Now then, who *are* you? Wot's your name? You know hour second floor, I know you do!"

"No," replied Master Tenpenny, with a fineness which Miss Bopps was not cultured enough to appreciate. "I

have never been there. But I know something about your lodger. She's called Mrs. Hildyard, eh?"

The girl nodded.

"How long has she been here?" he asked.

"Five weeks."

"Came from Paris?"

"Yes."

"No gent with her?"

"No—halone!"

"Hard-up?"

"Yes—not a farthin' to be seen till to-day. I see 'er myself go into the pawnbroker's three times."

"What did she say about herself?"

"She said she had rich friends that would always keep 'er habove want, hif they knew 'er position."

Tenpenny whistled a long note.

"Likewise," added Miss Bopps, "I think she've a been hand giv some money to the first floor. 'E've paid hup this hafternoon, in gold guineas. She brought 'ome a lot this morning—hand hi know 'ee haint got nothin' to do hand nothin' to pay—is poor wife hofferred me 'er butyful gold bracelet this very day."

"What are they?"

"A gent and 'is wife, a real lady—she *his* helegant!—name hof Mister and Missis Skirrow."

Tenpenny made full inquiries about these lodgers, paid for his shoes, chucked Miss Bopps, who was about his own height, under the chin, and left, promising to come and visit her again. She went to the door and looked after him. Not herself wanting in cunning she began to have a sense of admiration for Mr. Tenpenny's superior cleverness.

"La! there now," said she to herself. "'E've never told me 'is name—no more 'is bisness—neither 'is 'ome; hand 'ere hi've told *'im* heverythink! Haint 'ee a sharp un that's all!"

As Master Tenpenny darted out of Crook Street, round the corner of one of the big taverns at the outport towards Covent Garden, he was seized by the arm by Mr. Winnistoun.

"Turn down here, Tenpenny. We can talk in this alley. Now tell me what you have seen and heard."

Tenpenny related all that had passed.

"Are you sure the name was Skirrow?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you see the gentleman?"

"No, sir."

"Now, Tenpenny, not a word about this to anyone but your master and me." Slipping half a guinea into the clerk's hand, which the boy had no hesitation about taking from Mr. Winnistoun, the latter walked eastwards.

Jobson had no sooner got rid of Mrs. Hildyard than he had gone across to King's Bench Walk to give Winnistoun an account of the interview. The barrister listened in silence, but his massive brow contracted and his blue eyes while they pondered became of a deep violet shade. There was a tremor in his voice as he spoke.

"A very unpleasant business!" at length said Winnistoun. "To you it does not much matter. You are really in no way individually affected—but I wish you had not given her that cheque. Every clerk in Childs's will have seen the showy woman, who was cashing a cheque of Mr. Thaddæus Jobson's. She can annoy the old General too; but the world will not be very hard on him for that; though it chews scandal with hungry teeth and a tiger's palate, and the woman will of course pose as an impoverished innocent. But, the real danger is for your aunt—for Miss Jobson. Imagine what a terrible thing such an *exposé* would be to her—to her who never nourished a bad thought—to whom, in my soul I believe, it is an impossible idea!"

His voice had grown more deep and tremulous, and he actually rose and paced the room in some excitement. He communicated his feeling to Jobson.

"I had not thought of that!" the latter cried, thunder-struck. "Great heaven, Winnistoun, anything of that sort would kill her."

"The woman will be keen enough to understand that," said Winnistoun, "and she must be kept off at any cost. You say, she told you she had someone's advice. Who is the adviser?—some rascally attorney I suppose."

"I have no idea. I sent Timpany to follow her home. I thought it was no use to be squeamish about a little point

in such an affair as this. Perhaps we can find out how and where she lives."

"We will go and see if he has returned," said Winnistoun anxiously as he seized his hat and cane. His clerk stopped him to say that a client was waiting for him.

"I can see nobody to-day," said Winnistoun.

"But it is urgent, sir; I promised him a consultation."

"Then make him my compliments and say I am particularly engaged and advise him to take the case to Mr. Manning."

The clerk looked amazed and Jobson was half-gratified and half-surprised at this earnestness.

Mr. Timpany came in a very few minutes after the friends had reached the chambers in Pump Court. They were soon in possession of all his intelligence, less his own particular byplay with Miss Bopps.

Winnistoun put a few questions, and then, getting up, opened the door and motioned to Timpany.

"Timpany—you're a good boy and shall be duly rewarded—meantime, avaunt."

The boy disappeared from sight.

"I have been thinking," said Winnistoun, "that we need more information, and we must use that boy to get it. It was a very clever resource of his to leave the shoes until to-night. The difficulty is how to employ him without letting him suspect what the case is." Tenpenny could not help grinning at the other side of the door. "You gave him no reason for your singular conduct this morning?" continued Winnistoun.

"No."

"Well, his opinion of his master must be a curious and rather confused one!" exclaimed the barrister laughing. "Giving cheques to unknown stylish women and sending your clerk to track them home, is a fine way of opening practice, Thaddæus Jobson, and a model tutorship for a clerk! However we need not discuss that. I might at your age and in your position have done precisely the same thing. We must invent some story to satisfy this young rascal, by and by; meantime let him go on with his inquiries.

He may get some information out of that young woman if he pumps her cleverly. We will try to find out who Mrs. Hildyard's friend and adviser is."

It was upon the instructions given by Winnistoun, who strictly cautioned Timpany not to show any anxiety about his queries, but merely to put them as a matter of curiosity, that the boy had acted his part in the conversation with Miss Bopps.

As Winnistoun walked slowly eastward, he was revolving the facts he had just learned. One day he had heard from Bertha Jobson, when in a communicative mood, enough of Thaddæus Jobson's early love story to give to him, to whom a hint was a revelation, a pretty good idea of Mr. Thomas Skirrow's character. He rapidly forecast all the dangers that were likely to arise out of the untoward meeting of these two persons.

The ordinarily calm, powerful mind of the man was agitated with a whirl of fears and conjectures. So much so that in walking along he was unmindful of the crowd through which he passed, and came into collision with one or two persons who roughly recalled him to his senses.

He turned into a tavern in Covent Garden, and, throwing off his cloak, called for some wine. He was well known. The waiter addressed him respectfully. Several men at different tables saluted him. But he drew his hat over his eyes, moodily drank his wine and reflected.

At the next table to his two men were sitting. He had glanced at them as he took his seat, and, seeing nothing to engage his attention, had turned his back to them. They were talking in low tones—a bottle of port stood between them. Suddenly he heard the name "Jobson." His ears immediately opened. The man who sat near him was speaking in a harsh, disagreeable voice.

"I know all about him," it said. "He and I were born in the same town in Canada: as impudent a fellow as ever breathed—a damnable prig—and always lucky."

"No matter," said the other. "He is a very clever fellow, and making his way faster than any man in this generation. If he plays his cards well he will become the pet of the Whigs. See how he writes!"

"Ah! I wish I had the chance to answer him," said the other.

"Do you write, sir?" inquired his companion with some interest.

"Most certainly, sir," replied the other with effrontery. "I was a contributor to the press in Canada."

"Hum!" said the inquirer. "What I have seen of the press of that seditious colony is not engaging. Nevertheless, sir, I should think your pen might be made of some service to the Tories."

"It is exactly what I desire—am indeed seeking," replied his *vis-à-vis*.

"Well I am connected with one of their journals. They do not pay very well just now, but I have a shrewd suspicion the prospects of the party are rising. A reaction is coming on after the late reforms. If you wield a bold and clever pen, and do not mind attacking men in their weakest point—their character—you may have plenty of work. I should be happy to be of service to you, sir. May I ask your name?"

"Skirrow—Mr. Thomas Skirrow—my card, sir. You will observe I have no London address for the moment—but a note addressed at this coffee-house will always find me. May I have the pleasure of ordering another bottle of wine?"

"Well," said the other. "One doesn't often meet with a brother quill so generous as you, and I have nothing to occupy me. If you are disposed for a second bottle, sir, I am entirely at your service."

After waiting a few minutes longer, Winnistoun rose and, wrapping himself in his cloak, contrived to examine Mr. Skirrow from top to toe, with a keenness and particularity which fixed the image in his mind for ever.

CHAPTER XL.

AN AVOWAL.

WHEN Jobson entered his chambers next morning he was surprised to find Winnistoun already waiting for him, uneasily striding about his room. The barrister's face looked a little worn and anxious : he had spent the night in walking about his own chambers. Jobson, on the contrary, after dining out and a brisk walk to Arlington Street, had slept as if his aunt's peace or his own were in perfect security.

"You need not call Timpany, Jobson—I can tell you everything."

When he had completed his recital, he continued :

"The woman will no doubt want to see you again, before trying your uncle. You must then endeavour to make an arrangement with her to leave the country at any cost. If your uncle will not spend the money, I will advance it to you. You can repay me when you are able."

"You ?"

"Yes—it is imperative. Bertha Jobson shall not suffer a pang if I can protect her from it. Use me as you like."

Jobson looked steadfastly at Winnistoun.

"Why, Winnistoun, my dear friend, what does this mean ? How odd you look ! I never saw you so moved. Is it possible that——"

"Stop !" cried Winnistoun, the great drops breaking out from his brow. "Do not pass a word. My dear boy let it remain unsaid. We understand each other. I believe I know the hopelessness of what you suspect. No matter——"

He broke away and paced the room again with agitated footsteps.

Jobson looked out into Pump Court. A sudden revelation had broken in upon him. This great, powerful man, whom he loved as if he were an elder brother, whom he regarded as almost above all human weaknesses, had been touched by the subtle influence that deranges intellects and melts the iciest natures. He recalled his aunt's words on that day when, with tears in her eyes, she had adjured him never to speak to her again on a certain subject. He remembered the sorrowful past—the long shadow—the new sunrise—the brightness of the present noon—and he trembled to think that perhaps this strange, tender feeling of Winnistoun's might prove to be more dangerous to her peace of mind than the coarse plotting and vulgar enmity of a heartless woman and an unscrupulous man. He recalled a scene last night at dinner, when she had looked so well, and when Lord Swallowtail, sitting at her side, seemed for once to be in romantic mood.

There was an extraordinary sensibility in Winnistoun, a magical inspiration, corresponding with the tenderness and delicacy of his nature, which made him divine with rare accuracy what passed in the minds of any who were near him, with whom he had sympathies. This inspiration is only to be found in a very few great souls, generally and mostly among women, of large intellectual powers. He suddenly stopped and, standing in front of Jobson, held out both hands.

"Jobson," he said, "I guess much—much that I shrink from expressing in words. What this is to me you can hardly think. But be sure of one thing—there is laid up here," and he put his hand on his big head, "a something that nothing can obliterate—no fate can ever change. I shall be tender as a dove, patient as a slave. I will suffer without murmur, I will be devoted without reward and steadfast even under scorn or contempt. You can entrust to me—or allow me to share with you—the charge of a happiness and peace that it would be criminal to disturb. For God's sake don't speak now."

He took to walking about the room again.

Jobson continued to look out of the window. Winnistoun was the last person whom he would have

supposed to be susceptible to the ordinary human sentiment of love. The man's heart seemed to be so large and all-embracing, that the idea of an engrossing affection for any woman, such as he had just confessed for Bertha Jobson, was to the nephew a revelation—an enigma. He was not displeased. No more genial and welcome alliance could have occurred to him. Bertha's regard for Winnistoun he believed to be like his own—that of a reverent and admiring friendship. On the other hand, he did suspect Lord Swallowtail of a sentiment towards his aunt, and, although the young peer was several years younger than the lady he admired, his precocious maturity, old-fashioned appearance, and steady character, did not make the discrepancy appear to be so great as it really was: and he knew that Miss Jobson held Lord Swallowtail's character in very high esteem.

While Jobson pondered these thoughts, unconscious of the time they were occupying, Winnistoun restlessly paced the room. He was a little dashed by the young man's coldness. Such an alliance as his might well evoke enthusiasm: but his soul was too deep to be ruffled.

"Taddy Jobson," he said quietly, "what are you thinking of? I have at least the right of a friend—candour. At least I should know whether you appreciate the avowal I have made as a pleasant or a disagreeable one."

Jobson turned and took his friend by both hands.

"Could you for an instant doubt which it would be Winnistoun? Forgive me: I am thinking not of, but *for* you! I would not have such a great heart as yours torn and vexed by a useless convulsion. Do you know my Aunt's story? I am sure you do not. Let me tell it to you."

They sat down. Jobson, with nervous and graphic eloquence, detailed the events which had exerted so strange an influence on his own career. Winnistoun listened with sparkling eyes.

"This," said he, "explains to me that indescribably delicate melancholy which underlies all her lovely brightness and spirit. It always reminded me of the luminous depth of shadow when one looks down in a smooth lake,

with the sun glowing overhead—a motionless and faint melancholy gloom, which relieves the brilliant beauty of the upper light.”

He sat silent a while.

At length Jobson broke in on his musings.

“Winnistoun,” he said, “with all that in my memory, you can understand why I hardly knew how to hear that my dearest friend regarded my Aunt with more than friendly feelings. To be frank, I fear that you are not the only one—that another friend of mine entertains similar feelings, and for both I have good reason to anticipate a disappointment. That explains my reticence, my seeming coldness.”

“Jobson,” replied Winnistoun, “you deserve my thanks—this is deep friendship. I need not ask you to be silent. You know that, if, in an unguarded moment, I have avowed that which had perhaps better have been kept secret—I had no desire to invite you to act any part on my behalf. You have told me enough—your duty now is to leave me free: to leave your other friend—whose name I do not desire to know—free to discover his own fate. *We* must never mention this subject again. You may trust to me to act with all the tenderness and delicacy and devotedness of a love which is pure and holy.”

He rose up and, taking his hat, went away. An hour afterwards, passing along by the Inner Temple Gardens, Jobson saw Winnistoun walking up and down on the river-side, his hat on the back of his big head, the head bent, his hands clasped behind his back.

CHAPTER XLI.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

JOBSON that day, when he emerged from the *Chronicle* Office, had seen Skirrow on the pavement. His keen eyes had taken in the figure of his former schoolmate and antagonist, with that glance of an artist, whether with pen or pencil, brush, burel or chisel, which instantly absorbs all the features of an object. He had noted the traces of misery in the ugly face, the hang-dog look of the creature who has no money in his pockets and knows not where to seek it, the sense of vulgar need wont to be written in such expressive characters not only on lineaments, but on dress and manners. He had also surprised a mingled glance of deadly hatred and envious wonder, which had flashed in Skirrow's eye when he saw his prosperous school-fellow. But there was no anger in Jobson's heart. It was smitten with the wretchedness so painfully evident. His first impulse was to turn round and follow Skirrow home, and offer him some help : but he was checked by a delicacy which was needless. In such circumstances he would have rejected aid from Skirrow, and he did Skirrow the injustice to credit him with as great a refinement as his own. To Jobson's generosity that picture of coarse poverty appealed with irresistible force. He could not drive it from his mind : and the same evening he consulted his Aunt Bertha about the method of relieving it. He even thought of advertising in the newspapers for Skirrow's address and secretly conveying some assistance to him.

In talking with Winnistoun, it had not occurred to Jobson to say anything about this meeting or his feelings in regard to it. Now, there was no doubt that Skirrow was advising Mrs. Hildyard in her infamous designs on Sir Harry Jobson. Still Jobson could not forget the forlorn figure

he had seen. He thought of Emily. He wondered whether she looked as wretched as her husband. Any repugnance he had either for her or Skirrow was not enmity. To a refined and noble soul a mean enemy is never an object of hate. When the foe ceases to be equal, tumbles in the mire of life and lies there foul and spattered, hate, which may be a fine sentiment and a healthy one in a healthy mind—is disarmed. Jobson's enemy was no longer worth Jobson's antipathy. It dwindled to contempt—and pity took its place.

He accordingly in a feigned hand addressed two ten-pound notes, in an envelope, to Skirrow, and sent them by post.

Two days after a missive reached him at Pump Court. It had in truth been delivered to Master Timpany by Miss Bopps, who was never more surprised than when he answered her knock at the door of the chambers to which the letter had been addressed.

"Well!" she said, opening her blue eyes, drawing a long breath and expelling it again in an aspirate of portentous power. "You *har* a schemer—you har. So this is your hoffice, Mister, hey?"

Timpany for once blushed up to the roots of his hair and looked confused.

"Look here," he said, "Beauty—don't you go and say anything to anybody about it."

"Say hanythink habout what?"

"Why—where I live—and all that. Don't tell your guv'ner you know. What do you want?"

"Hi want this 'ere gen'leman—Mister Jobson. There's a letter from our first floor lady. Now, look 'ere,—I see there's some queer game hup. *She* gives me 'alf a crown—hand says she, 'Hangy,' says she, 'you just go hand look hin the Directory, where Mr. Thad—Thad—deuce Jobson's chambers is hin the Temple.' Well, I went hand I got the reference 'ere in Pump Court, barrister-hat-law,—and she wrote that hon this letter, hand then says she—'You slip hoff hand never say a word to a soul,' says she, 'hand give that letter hin yourself to Mr. Jobson's chambers.'"

"All right," said Timpany, stretching out his hand. "I'll give the letter to Mr. Jobson."

"But look yere," said the girl, putting the letter behind her back, "who *his* your master, and what 'ave 'ee to do with Mrs. Skirrow, hey?"

She spoke in a soft persuasive voice and her eyes looked cunningly into those of Master Timpany.

"I can't tell you now," he replied. "He's in there, and if he was to catch me talking with you, he'd pitch me downstairs. Give me the letter. I'll come and see you soon and take you out in the park and tell you all about it." She handed him the letter.

"Now for a kiss," cried Master Timpany.

Angelina Bopps turned and ran for her life—pursued by Timpany. Unluckily, at the last flight she tripped and rolled down stairs, but without any injury beyond that of her dignity, and she went off vowing to scratch Timpany's eyes out next time she saw him.

Timpany, after turning the note over without extracting any information from it, handed it to Jobson, who tore it open and read.

TADDY JOBSON,—Forgive me for troubling you, but I cannot keep silent. No one but you could have sent the aid which reached us yesterday—alas! sadly needed. Tom pretends to believe it is a secret gift from my father, who has utterly cast me off for marrying him. But I am certain it is not. I am ashamed and mortified to receive it. You heap coals of fire on my head and they burn into my brain. As for *him* nothing would touch him. I would give worlds not to write what I do—and I do it from no friendship for you—but from pure shame and sense of right. He is as implacable against you as ever. He will use this money partly to enable him to get into a position in which he can injure you. Send no more, for God's sake, and beware of Tom Skirrow and a bad woman named Mrs. Hildyard. He and she are working together, and if they can they will destroy your peace and your reputation. You once knew me as

EMILY LATOUCHE.

P.S.—Do not make any attempt to reply to this.

This letter, confirming the suspicions of Jobson and Winnistoun, was shown to the latter.

"We must act promptly," he said. "You need not care about Skirrow's enmity. It can of itself do you little harm. It is this weapon he has in his hand—this Mrs. Hildyard—which you must take out of it. A nice pair they are! Between the lines of this letter one reads a great deal. I wonder how much of the 'sense of right' would have operated to bring you this warning, if some other, deeper, more selfish motive were not inspiring the writer. Skirrow is obviously a reprobate in more lines than one, and outraged womanly pride is at the bottom of this. Well, we may at least take advantage of it."

"What! Winnistoun—you—you would take advantage of this woman's weakness? At any rate the man is her husband. She married him. What right has she to betray him?"

Winnistoun's grey eyes looked out sparkling.

"Taddy Jobson, your sentiments do you honour my boy—though they savour a little of the superfine. I had no idea, I can assure you, of using the wife against the husband. What I propose to take advantage of is the warning here clearly conveyed. We must dissociate Skirrow from Hildyard—the firm of Skirrow and Hildyard must be dissolved, and at once. Its ties are getting too close. The twenty pounds you gave to her is spent, I should say—and Skirrow is not such a fool as to tell her of *his*. She will be down upon you or your uncle before many hours are gone by. We must anticipate her. I will see her to-night."

"How?"

"I shall write and make an appointment—in more precise and to her case appropriate terms—an 'assignation' with her. She is sure to come—if she have nothing better to do. Stay! I have it!"

He sat down and, selecting from a drawer of his secretary some notepaper of a peculiarly dainty and costly character, he wrote:—

"A friend, who has seen Mrs. Hildyard, but is unknown to her, desires that she will give him the pleasure to meet him, at the *Hotel des Etrangers*, Gerrard Street, Soho, in the

large coffee-room, at the last table at the back on the left, this evening at nine o'clock. She will recognise him by a white rose-bud in his buttonhole."

He handed the epistle to Jobson.

"You seem to write with a practised hand!" he exclaimed slyly. "What are we two being brought to in this wretched affair!"

"Stay," said Winnistoun, looking very earnestly in Jobson's face: "Even a joke like that I cannot allow to pass, especially after what I have so lately confessed to you. I believe on your part it was more thoughtless than earnest—but I must tell you that, though I am a man of the world, intimate with the world and its ways, as intimate as if I had, like other men, learned its ways by treading the slough and mud with my own feet, it is my satisfaction to be able to say that, with no pretension to superb sanctity, I have a heart unsullied by any memories of vile intrigues. Human hearts and human lives have, alas! been so largely laid open to me, that I know all their diseases and all their inclinations, and all their waywardnesses, and this letter which I pen so carefully to catch this woman, is dictated, not from any personal experience of my own, but from my knowledge of human nature and its methods of acting."

"But you are incurring a great danger—more than I incurred in that foolish cheque business. You will give her a hold on you too!"

"I am not afraid; in any case I would gladly run a greater risk to ward off this peril from one you wot of. *Soit, mon ami*. This affair requires promptness, wit, and courage."

Jobson found, on his return to his chambers, Sir Harry Jobson, walking up and down in a state of great agitation.

"I have seen her!" he burst out impetuously—"just now—half an hour ago—in Piccadilly—close to Arlington Street! She is in London, sir! I rushed to a cab. I saw she recognised me!"

"My dear Uncle, I knew it. Sit down, I will tell you all about it."

The General was greatly excited and annoyed by Jobson's story. He resented the young man's efforts to shield him,

an older and therefore more sagacious person, from annoyance. Further he was, at first, inappeasably angry with Jobson for taking into a family confidence even so worthy and agreeable a man as Winnistoun. The General had the good old-fashioned notion that family secrets were sacred to the family and ought never to pass beyond the circle of blood. Jobson could not tell him of Winnistoun's feelings toward Bertha, and indeed they would not have excused him since he had learned of them long after confiding the secret to the barrister. The General however was at length pacified, and allowed Jobson to send for his friend to hold a consultation. Then Sir Harry Jobson, after two hours of earnest colloquy, owned to himself that Taddy's choice had been a wise one. Winnistoun had not only shown himself a gentleman and a subtle fellow, but a brave and honourable man. The General gave him a *carte blanche* to come to terms with the enemy.

At nine o'clock that evening Winnistoun, attired in a remarkable costume, which he had procured from a Strand tailor, and in which he supposed himself to represent, to a hair or a tie, a blooming specimen of the "swell mob," sat with a flower in his buttonhole, and an immense, brilliant, blue satin stock covering his bosom, at the table he had designated in the *Hotel des Etrangers*. He spoke French to the waiters in an accent that surprised them, having regard to his appearance, and a seedy Gallican journalist who sat at a near table supping on a *ragoût* and some medoc, stared at him curiously with his myopean eyes, through the thick glasses. When however the barrister in the same excellent French and in a quiet, easy style quite out of harmony with his loud appearance, ordered from the *carte* a supper for two persons, and added "I await a lady," the *garçon* shrewdly communicated to a colleague, that the person in the corner was a nobleman in disguise.

The door opened brusquely. The rustle of a silk dress was heard. A feathered hat appeared, and a tall woman, with a veil over her face, walked with deliberate steps towards the end of the long room. Midway she raised her veil, and holding up gold lorgnettes to her eyes she glanced steadily at Winnistoun, and boldly came forward.

Winnistoun had intended to be loud and demonstrative. Instead of that he rose, and with a bow which seemed immediately to set him out of his extraordinary dress, he said :

"Mrs. Hildyard—you are indeed obliging!"

She looked him all over with her bright dark eyes, and smiled as she curtsied with extreme politeness.

"The summons was 'obliging,'" she said laughing carelessly, and without waiting to be asked assuming a seat opposite to Winnistoun, "if not indeed peremptory. And I am sorry to say that it was anonymous. I overlooked the impropriety because I felt a natural curiosity to see the writer."

"You observe the signal," replied Winnistoun pointing to the rose. "There can be little doubt as to my identity."

"On the contrary, if you will forgive me for saying so," said she, "there is an absence of identity between the writer of the note, and the style of the individual whom I see before me. Those clothes can hardly belong to you, sir; and your aside to the *garçon* was with a French accent rarely attained by the London bagman."

"Ah!" replied Winnistoun, "you are too sharp—you do the bagman an injustice. Let me present myself: Mr. Warleigh." He had chosen his second name. "I have dared to hope that perhaps you would not resent it, if—in this public room—I venture to anticipate that you would do me the honour to allow me to provide a supper—which may at least make time pass more agreeably."

"There is certainly nothing to complain of in so thoughtful a proposal, sir, and, as you say, in the circumstances, with that short-sighted ape staring at us through glasses as thick as a magic lantern's, there may even be no impropriety in my acceptance of your courtesy."

She drew off her gloves, coolly, deliberately, eyeing Winnistoun with a gaze, half-bold, half-amorous, which severely tried even his steady nerves. But he was never at a loss, and he instantly plunged into a conversation about London, Paris, society, scandal, full of persiflage, in which the lady acquitted herself to admiration, while she ate and drank the fare he had so carefully selected.

Winnistoun however had set himself a task which he was determined to carry through successfully, and he braced himself up to the effort. All the time his heart was bleeding. He was a man who could not scan a face and figure like that before him, with nonchalance or complacency. The rouged cheeks, the wicked eyes, the marks of care, of sorrow and debauch, the bold brazen manner and metallic voice, and yet, beneath it all, the faint remains of a nobler and better womanhood—all this pierced to the core of his being. Once he visibly shuddered. But he gradually brought his magnetic powers to bear upon her. His small searching eye never left her face. She felt that this strange man was reading her through and through. She was conscious from the nature of his raillery that he was only letting her know how thoroughly he understood her—and there was a vein of fine cynicism in his conversation which she was quick enough to appreciate, if she could not enjoy it. The great head, with the grey eyes, now loomed up before her, powerful—omnipotent. He had run his hand through the hair which he had had so carefully dressed to suit his disguise, in the back street in Soho, and now it stood out roughly all over his head. The vast blue stock had escaped from his waistcoat and swagged to one side but he looked more commanding than ever, and he had succeeded before supper was ended in making her feel that she was in the hands of *power* and *authority*. She would gladly have made some excuse to get away, but Winnistoun's grey eye was on her, his talk went on quick, bright, easy, keen, satirical, witty as ever. She was fascinated.

The myopean French journalist calling for his greasy *paletot*, invested himself therewith, and vanished. The room was nearly empty: the weary waiters were nodding in their little cabinet.

"O La!" cried the lady looking at her watch. "It is past eleven o'clock. What a charming man you are! I must go."

She reached out her hand for her large beaver hat and feather which lay on the chair beside her.

"Stay, Mrs. Surtees," cried Winnistoun in a calm, deep voice, which instantly arrested her. "I have something to say to you!"

As he mentioned her real name she started, drew a rapid breath, and stared at her *vis-à-vis*. He regarded her with keen, watchful glances.

"Who are *you*, sir, who address me thus—by a name long forgotten?"

"Forgive me, madam," said Winnistoun calmly. "I am not here to be cross-examined but to cross-examine. You *must* recall the fact that you met and knew very many people in India—some of whom perhaps," he added significantly, "you would rather forget?"

She had closed her right hand and it lay on her mouth, as she stared at him with an expression of alarm. His glance was steady and insupportable. She dropped her eyelids a moment and then flared up.

"What do you mean, sir?" she cried in a loud excited voice, which startled the waiters—

"My dear lady," replied Winnistoun in a calm, low tone, "you are disturbing the servants. You must see that I have had a reason for seeking this interview and I may say that I mean to carry it through. If you can preserve your calmness it will be more agreeable to both of us, but any case I shall do my duty."

"Duty!" she said glancing quickly round and turning pale. "Are you a detective?"

Not a movement, or an expression of her face escaped the watchful grey eyes.

"Madam," he said, "the time has not yet come to declare what I am. Suffice it to say I will prove to you before you go that I have a right to act as I am doing."

He had suggested to her two hypotheses either of which as he saw excited her alarm. There were people who had known her in India whom at least she did not wish to meet, and the idea of a detective aroused her fears. Winnistoun was quick to take advantage of this.

"Permit me, Mrs. Surtees," he said, "to talk to you frankly, and as an old acquaintance. I know your history. The beautiful and accomplished Helena Darnley, once the darling of an indulgent mother, married to Mr. Surtees, again a Garrison *belle*, in India, again married to Lieutenant Verulam, now transformed into Mrs. Hildyard of Crook

Street, London, and ready to come to an assignation made by an anonymous stranger, is sitting before me."

He spoke in deep, sorrowful, thrilling tones, and his eyes had grown tender as he looked at her painted face. She covered it with her white hands. There were jewels on the fingers. Winnistoun's eye caught them.

"Count the rings upon your hands," he said boldly. "From whom did they all come, and what is their history?"

"Spare me!" she murmured. "Who are you, strange man? Whence do you come? What do you want with me?"

She had raised her head from her hands and spoke the last sentence with a tremor in her voice.

"Where is Verulam?" inquired Winnistoun in a solemn tone.

She clasped her hands together, looked wildly round the room, and then at Winnistoun: but she made a powerful effort to shake herself free from his fastening gaze.

She rose up.

Winnistoun did not move. He was eyeing her intently.

"I shall answer no more questions, sir!" she said, her dark eye flashing.

"You will sit down again," said Winnistoun calmly. "You are not going away."

"Who will prevent me?"

"Would you like to answer these questions in another place—in a more public and solemn manner? I think you had better sit down."

She sank upon the chair, and looked at him with a surly anger in her eyes.

"Your object in coming to London, Mrs. Surtees, is to annoy and plunder Sir Harry Jobson, against whom you may imagine you have legal claims, or you may think you have at all events evidence which it would injure him with the world to produce. You have already used this knowledge to enable you to extort money from his nephew. That places you in a perilous position."

"Only, sir," replied the woman recovering her *sang-froid*

and looking maliciously at Winnistoun, "only perilous to me if Mr. Jobson chooses to expose his uncle, sir."

"You are well advised no doubt," said Winnistoun, with a sneer. "But, remember, Madam, once before the Court, the whole of your life comes under review, and what if, even at the risk of exposing a temporary scandal, General Jobson should choose to leave that life to the examination of an English judge and jury?"

The woman tried to look steadily in Winnistoun's face, but her eye fell, and he could see that she grew pale beneath the paint.

"Well," she said, playing with the edge of the tablecloth, and affecting a little laugh, "it is a mere question between the value of a reputation to General Jobson and my worthless character."

She was getting back her cynicism, and with it her strength. She looked up sidewise at Winnistoun's face to see how he received the answer.

"True," said Winnistoun, half-thinking aloud and half-addressing her, "there is an enormous discrepancy—and there are three happinesses in the scale."

"Aha!" she said. "Mr. Stranger, you are sharp, I see. You remember there is a Miss Jobson? Perhaps," she added, suddenly opening her dark eyes full on the barrister, "perhaps you too are personally interested in the matter?"

Spite of himself the blood rushed to Winnistoun's face. He was angry at his own indiscretion.

"I act for others," he said carelessly. "Their business is their own. My counsel to them is to treat with perfect contempt an effort to use a calumny as a means of extorting money. And in certain contingencies, they will act upon my advice. But now, Mrs. Surtees, let us speak reasonably. What do you want? What do you hope to gain by the line you are pursuing?"

She shrugged her shoulders.

"*Il faut vivre!*" she exclaimed.

"Is that all?" he enquired. "An appeal to generosity or pity may be listened to without dishonour, but threats never!"

"Excuse me, sir," replied the woman, drawing her mantle

about her shoulders, "but I should prefer discussing this with those who are interested. I do not know you. I do not even know whether you are authorised to treat with me. What affair is it of yours?"

"O, madam! simply a professional matter. I am a man of business."

"You represent Sir Harry Jobson?"

"Yes."

"Well what are you authorised to propose?"

"I am prepared to assume the responsibility of making terms, if they are not absurd ones. They are good only for this hour, so do not be in a hurry to run away. They are subject to these conditions—*First*, that you leave the country within forty-eight hours, and agree not to return. *Secondly*, that you do not communicate any further from this moment with a person named Skirrow or his wife."

"He is easily dismissed!" she said with a sneer.

"He is not, I dare say, a friend worth cultivating," said Winnistoun bowing with perfect courtesy, but speaking with a tone of terrible sarcasm. It crushed her with its contempt.

"*Thirdly*, madam, that you hand to me all letters received by you from General Jobson and now in your possession. I doubt not they are in that little reticule, which you are so careful to retain on your person. For these three conditions to which you will agree in writing and to which I will do you the justice to believe that you will honestly adhere, I am prepared to offer you an annuity which will make you comfortable for life in any city in Europe."

"And what security shall I have that this desirable sum—which by the way you have not mentioned—will reach me from time to time?"

"That of Messrs. Coutts, the bankers, with whom the necessary securities will be deposited to-morrow, if you sign this arrangement to night."

"And if I don't?"

"No further negotiations will be entertained."

"State the sum which you assume would make me comfortable in any city in Europe."

"Four hundred sterling a year, and, I may say, that sum has been fixed upon, not solely from the desire to be rid of a disagreeable incident—but also from a generous and a sincere wish—I am instructed to say this—that it may enable the recipient to maintain for the rest of her days an honourable as well as a comfortable existence."

The tone in which Winnistoun spoke these words, the mixture in his voice of kindness and of severity, touched the woman's heart. For once a little tear sparkled in her eye.

"It is handsome," she said in a low voice. "Less might have satisfied me."

The barrister had won the day. He would not however leave her until he had her signature to a paper which he had prepared, and had also received a small packet of crumpled letters which she gave him out of the reticule, and for which, now declaring his real name and address, he gave her his personal undertaking. He further advised her to take a room in the French hotel until her departure, and agreed to send an agent to Bopps's next day to settle her account and bring away her things. She was now as anxious as he, not to incur the risk of a meeting with Mr. Skirrow.

It was past midnight when Winnistoun, with the precious letters and the agreement in his pocket, was admitted by the night porter into Inner Temple Lane. He was quite unconscious of the ridiculous appearance he presented in his bagman's costume, and the man looked at him twice before letting him through the door. When he reached his rooms, he drew a long breath, and threw himself on a sofa. The drops stood out upon his brow. He had made a tremendous effort and the reaction was upon him. But a smile was on his pale face and a gleam of triumph in his eye.

"Bertha will never know it, thank God!" he said to himself, "but I have saved her from a great sorrow."

CHAPTER XLII.

A PROPOSAL.

IN Arlington Street Miss Jobson held a little court, of which she was queen. The General's gallant friends liked to call there and gossip, and watch the quiet, graceful woman, who spoke so evenly and yet so well, with just a touch of melancholy gravity that was a pretty foil to the charm of her liveliness; who was thoughtful without pedantry—a clear-headed woman and not a blue-stocking. She fascinated all her friends—the energetic, not handsome, but well-knit and thoroughly English Miss Adelaide Swallowtail, and her practical brother; the good-looking and more volatile Lord Cainham, and his mother, a lady, though not of aristocratic birth, of a large and distinguished presence; Mr. and Miss Childerley, and many others—amongst them Winnistoun. While, all unconscious of webs that were being woven by enemies and counter-woven by Thaddæus Jobson and his friend, Miss Jobson thus reigned in her small kingdom, Lord Swallowtail assumed over her a curious guardianship. With business-like penetration he had seen that the way to Miss Jobson's heart was through her nephew. His interests formed the pretext of many conversations and many visits. From Mr. Childerley, Swallowtail had learned the views he had formed with regard to Jobson, and highly approved of them. The Childerley connection was a good one, a connection which the ennobled descendant of a rich banker might well appreciate; so Swallowtail, with praiseworthy friendliness, took every opening for recommending it to Miss Jobson. His sober and confident way of talking, his steady good-sense and high culture, and his evident regard for Thaddæus Jobson made him to Miss Jobson one of the most agreeable of her circle: she looked upon him as so true a friend of “Taddy's,” and with all his gravity,

so much junior to herself, that notwithstanding Jobson's unlucky hint, she shut down any idea of Swallowtail's motives which might now and then faintly come up, treated him and his sister with familiar friendliness, and was at home to either of them at almost any reasonable hour.

Thus, one fine morning towards the end of the season, when London was hot and dusty, and society was beginning to think of its flitting and dispersion, the sound of a horse's iron-shod hoof on the round stones of Arlington Street, striking clear through the open jalousies of Miss Jobson's boudoir, she laid down the little frame in which she was working a white swan in silk, sailing on a green sea in fine wool, the piece, when finished, intended to be adapted for a mat to sustain one of the silver lamps used in the drawing-room. She had been thinking very deeply, as she bent over her work. Her fine, smooth brow, had been ruffled with pondering, there was a colour in her cheek.

General and Lady Pilkington were up the street at the Bath Hotel. They had been in town for two days, arriving somewhat unexpectedly for a brief stay, and the night before had dined at General Jobson's. The company was necessarily small, at that time of the season, and with short notice Cainham had managed to come—a genial, engaging fellow, with pretty manners, a fair presence, a clever and easy tongue; and Winnistoun, whom Jobson had asked, and who, to tell the truth behind the scenes, had in order to be present broken two other engagements.

Lady Pilkington remained as straight and fine as ever, but her face wore the evidences of age, the crow's feet were coming at the corners of the eyes, lines were delicately marked upon the brow. She had however lost little of her vivacity, though her manner was more deliberate than that of her prime. Yet she was a striking-looking woman, and the early grey had grown no greyer, so that the difference in her age was hardly appreciable. General Pilkington wore his age less favourably. The tall form was beginning to stoop, and the clear eye to fail, and the hands that used to be so firm, were somewhat tremulous.

The conversation at the dinner-table was led by Winnistoun, who sat between Lady Pilkington and Miss Jobson.

To her ladyship, whose quiet country life had sequestered her so much of late years from lively and witty company, the freshness of Jobson, the racy, cultured, crisp talk of Winnistoun, and the rattling sallies of Lord Cainham, were like a sparkling draught, exciting her own clever intellect to bright effervescence. Winnistoun was charmed with her. How fine she was—how clearly and decidedly she marked her ideas—how neatly she turned off the point of any epigram he directed at her and foiled it with another of her own. With what accent and verve she took up his French and threw out original sallies in that Attic tongue.

Meantime the two Generals talked together of old campaigns.

Bertha Jobson had not spent so delightful an evening for a long time. She loved to listen to all this—to see each of her friends sparkling—now and then to throw in some quiet observation which Winnistoun would bend his head and ear to listen to, and instantly bring all his wits to surround and enrich with his own bright or humorous glosses. There was an air of unconsciously chivalrous devotion in all his manner toward Bertha Jobson, a softness in his small piercing eye when he looked at her, and a gentleness of voice when he addressed her; and the undimmed vision and unimpaired sensitiveness of the experienced lady on the other side of him noted it all.

“My dear,” she said, in the drawing-room, when they had left the gentlemen, and were sipping their coffee, “who *is* that clever, charming, omniscient, gallant Mr. Winnistoun? I never met him before.”

“Oh!” said Bertha—an ingenuous pleasure breaking out over her features, which reminded her friend before her of the early, young, untroubled days—“he is an intimate friend of ours—one of Taddy’s most intimate. We saw so much of him at the Temple. A barrister—everybody knows him, and he knows everybody, and everybody likes him!”

“A very bad character indeed!” said Lady Pilkington.

“Why, dear Lady Pilkington?” replied Bertha, awaiting the reply with open lips and some eagerness.

“A man whom everybody likes must adapt himself to

everybody, bad, good, and indifferent. He can neither be earnest nor sincere. It is either sheer stupidity or clever wickedness which gives a man that reputation."

"Why, Lady Pilkington, he is one of the best men in the world."

"Then, Bertha, everybody does *not* like him. That is impossible. As a rule I judge of a man's value by the number and character of his enemies. If he is able and true he will be sure to have many and strong ones. If he is gentle, conciliating and yet sincere, he will have *some*. If he is a nincumpoop he may have only a few—and not serious ones—no one *wastes* hatred on idiots. If he is a clever, ingenious knave he may manage to *appear* to have none."

"But you have left out one character," cried Bertha. "The man who is so noble, so great, so sincere—so clever, so gentle, and yet so strong, that he makes no enemies, or knows how to conciliate them without compromising either his dignity or his honesty."

"Never saw him, my dear."

"Lady Pilkington—you saw him to-night!"

Miss Jobson spoke with emphasis and in a deep tone unusual to her. Lady Pilkington gazed at her full in the face. Bertha's eye fell, and as if feeling that her ladyship was penetrating some secret, she said, raising her eyes again.

"I speak of him thus because he is Taddy's best friend."

Lady Pilkington was about to reply, but she suddenly checked herself.

The conversation turned, and by and by the gentlemen came up. While Winnistoun and Cainham sat down on either side of Bertha, Lady Pilkington asked Jobson about his friend. He told her "what a wonderful fellow" Winnistoun was. She nodded her head.

"Bewitches everybody, I see, Master Taddy."

Jobson glanced a moment across the room. Lord Cainham, finding it useless to compete with the skilful barrister, was trying to edge into the graver conversation of the elders on the East India Company's latest military policy; and Winnistoun, with sparkling eyes and a slight

French action, animated but dignified, was deeply engaged with Miss Jobson.

The young barrister felt and looked confused. He remembered Winnistoun's avowal and he was afraid Lady Pilkington would drag the secret out of him. But the keen dame said no more. She was not the woman to take a young man into consultation about his aunt's sentiments. She had thrown out a hint which ought at least to put him on his guard.

"Bertha," said her ladyship, as she kissed the younger lady in the boudoir, "you are now a woman of experience and sense. But you may before long need another woman's counsel. Will you seek it frankly, dear?"

Miss Jobson's clear eyes looked into those of Lady Pilkington, which showed a gentle anxiety as she returned the gaze, and glanced fondly at the maturing yet sweet face before her.

"I cannot think what it will be," said Miss Bertha, with a light forced laugh, "but you know I have no one else to go to." And she kissed her friend warmly.

Now it was over this and other matters that Bertha Jobson had been pondering, as her busy needle flew up and down, when the ring of the horse's shoes, as he walked down Arlington Street, made her lay down her work and take a look at herself in the glass.

In two minutes Lord Swallowtail was announced. He came in with his easy, deliberate step and manner, and shook hands, but Bertha, regarding him a little shyly, for he too had been in her thoughts, was conscious, with a woman's quick sensitiveness, that he was touched with an excitement he was striving to repress. His fresh colour was somewhat impaired, and his eye looked uneasy.

"Where shall we sit down?" he said gravely.

Bertha laughed. It was an odd beginning.

"I will keep my seat and go on with my work," she replied simply, and Swallowtail nervously seized a chair and placed it near her. The room was so small that he might have sat in the opposite corner and talked to her with perfect ease; as he had often done before. A slight flush had come over her cheek and her eyes had brightened as

she brought the work near them and began to ply her needle. Her chair was a low one, and a small foot was visible, encased in a prunella sandal, the ribbon crossed on the instep, over a black stocking. From his higher seat he looked down upon her.

With his banker-like and politic instinct Lord Swallowtail began with business.

"I have just come from Downing Street, where I have been to try and secure for Jobson some briefs in the Treasury prosecutions against those forgers. I am glad to say it is arranged. He is to be one of the juniors."

"How good of you!" cried Miss Jobson, letting her hands drop on her lap, and looking up with her naive, open glance. "He will be delighted. And I——"

She hesitated for the words.

"And you?" said Swallowtail looking her straight in the face.

"I am infinitely grateful."

She caught up the work to her face again and stitched away. But he saw the colour increasing in her cheek, and a slight trembling in the small hand which held the frame.

"It will do him good," said Swallowtail. "The Attorney and Solicitor General are both very busy just now, and perhaps it will be managed that Jobson will have most of the work thrown on him. A fine opportunity for him."

"I am sure he will do justice to it," replied Bertha, not taking her eyes off the swan whose neck was gradually growing under her busy fingers.

"No doubt of it," replied Swallowtail, shifting uneasily in his chair, and feeling conscious at the moment that the answer was a stupid one. He stared at Bertha awkwardly and then in desperation at what threatened to become a dead pause, he gasped out:

"Do you know, Miss Jobson, *why* I take so keen an interest in Jobson and all that concerns him?" He leaned slightly forward, looking eagerly for the answer.

"Why?" she cried, dropping her hands again, and calmly returning Swallowtail's gaze. "I suppose you are very fond of your friend."

"Y—yes!" said Swallowtail, "and forgive me, Bertha Jobson, I am very fond too of my friend's aunt."

"Lord Swallowtail!"

"Pray—pray, Miss Jobson, pardon me, let me speak; let me say how deep and powerful a love you have excited in my heart. Let me say how long it has endured, how long it has waited, how sincere it is—and yet how unworthy I feel now that I have brought myself to avow it, to claim the hand of so true a woman, and a heart so pure and loving."

She brought her hands up and clasped them over the symbol of which he spoke, and a strange sadness came into her face, and her eyes fell.

"O pray stop, Lord Swallowtail!"

It was like the gentle cry of a dove which a friendly hand was inadvertently pressing to pain.

"Why should I stop, Miss Jobson—dear Miss Jobson—when my heart prompts me to speak—to tell you, at last, after long treasuring the hope, the wish to say what I feel?—why should you, who have ever received me with so much kindness—let me say favour—now ask me to keep down feelings I cannot repress?"

She covered her fair, blooming face with her hands, but did not speak.

"I had hoped," continued Swallowtail, his manly voice growing singularly gentle, and tremulous with excitement. "I had hoped that—perhaps—my feeling had been—had been perceived—that the kindness and friendliness with which I have ever been treated by you at Elm Court and here, had, in a sense, only been reciprocal of my own sentiments—that you had seen how constant, how patient, how strong my devotion towards you was. Not that you have treated me as any other than a friend; still the friendship was intimate, and I know my sister even thought that my aspiration was not altogether a hopeless one."

Bertha Jobson took down her hands from her face, and turned with a winning yet grave smile toward Swallowtail.

"Do you know how old I am, my lord?" she said.

"Well," replied Lord Swallowtail, taken aback by this

question, "I never thought of imagining. I—I really don't know how to answer that question."

"I am forty-two next birthday."

"Miss Jobson," said Lord Swallowtail, involuntarily looking at her youngish face and figure—"you cannot be joking—at such a moment—a serious moment for me. But I say I never thought of the matter—and," he added gallantly, "I do not care to know anything about it. It would in no way affect my feelings."

"I am forty-two, Lord Swallowtail—and you are a little over thirty—or at least ten years my junior. Not for that though—you are a man, and a true and a mature one—and not for that do I feel the pain you give me by your avowal. You must see now why I have always been innocently intimate and familiar with you, as the friend of my nephew. I could never imagine, even if sometimes there might be indications in your manner of warmer feelings than friendship, that any distinct designs would grow out of it—any incongruous affection. I—I have ceased to think of such things.—For some reason, I cannot tell you, they seem to have banished themselves from my existence—"

As she said this, Swallowtail, agitated as he was, noticed the colour mount to her cheek and a hesitation appear in her manner. Some thought had flashed across her mind and stopped the declaration.

"At all events," she went on, "I have banished them. For you I have the sincerest friendship. Your abilities, your sturdy, upright, noble character and mature sagacity have won my admiration and esteem. As Taddy's friend you are even more to me than an ordinary friend. I trust you, I could repose familiar confidence in you, but my dear Lord Swallowtail, I have no more than that to give, and you do yourself an injustice by asking it. It would make us both ridiculous."

"No! no! my dear Miss Jobson—" cried Swallowtail.

She rose and lifted one hand. The other was on her heart.

"Don't say more, I beseech you!" she cried in a voice of anguish. "You hurt me. I cannot bear it!" and she sank on the seat and, covering her face with her handkerchief, relieved herself of a flood of tears.

Swallowtail was in an agony. His impulse was to throw his arms around her and soothe her : but he would as soon have clasped in his embrace a Princess Royal. He stepped round and round the room, and then came back.

"Don't, for God's sake, Miss Jobson !—forgive me—I will never say a word to grieve you again. Do control yourself and say you forgive me."

Never had the methodic and slow-blooded Swallowtail spoken with an emotion so deep and true as that which now animated him.

She suddenly ceased, and, after a struggle mastered her agitation. She uncovered her face and turning towards his lordship, with an attempt at a smile, held out her hand, which he seized and pressed to his lips.

"Forgive *me*," she said gently. "You could not have known or suspected my feelings, or my situation. I thank you for the honour—"

"Nay—for any sake do not use that word."

"Well—the kindness—the affection, you have shown me. At least know that there is no personal feeling about it."

"May I not hope?"

"No."

"May I believe that no other—"

"No other person would ever think of such a thing—and—and—if he did—I give you my word—my answer would be the same. Will you forgive? I cannot remain any longer—*Adieu!*"

And she left Swallowtail to dismiss himself.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A HEAVENLY PLATONIC.

BERTHA Jobson in her room, sank upon her bed, and lying there with her cheek upon her fevered hand and her eyes shut, she thought over the scene that had just passed. Though Lord Swallowtail had been so intimate and constant a visitor, and, as we have seen, his unwonted gallantry of manner had struck even Jobson's eye, Bertha Jobson had never allowed herself to think of the young lord's attentions as anything more than intimacy carried to the verge of sentiment, which would pass away. For herself she had felt towards him nothing more warm than amiable esteem, and no regret now entered among the thoughts that crowded in her mind, beyond that of having been obliged to wound a very manly and sensible friend.

Lord Swallowtail had indeed passed from her thoughts.

Yet there was a throbbing at her heart and temples, and a troubled torrent of ideas running through her brain. Something that had lain hidden, a shadowy idea in the background, which she had never permitted to assume shape or to become a subject to be dwelt upon, now rose up distinct and irrepressible.

What had she said to Lord Swallowtail?

"No other person would think of such a thing—and if he did—*I give you my word—!*"

Was that true? Was there no other who might "think of such a thing?" And if he did was her heart as free as she had said? With a strange wild energy that heart leaped, spite of all her effort—for she made an effort—to convince herself of the absurdity, the hopelessness, of the thought—leaped up and spoke and answered *No!* And as the answer came from the depths of her soul, a throb and a sob went together—and sorrow came in upon her. What

had she done? What might not happen? And yet her word was pledged

She lay pondering, and battling with herself. The lunch bell rang but she heeded it not: for she was laying bare her heart to herself and to God.

It was a long time before the calm came—but it was perfect calm.

“It is God’s will,” she said rising. “Was my life not happy enough before? Why should it be disturbed by the shadow of an idea of a foolish passion?”

At length she rose, and rang the bell for her maid to come and dress her. She would have liked to go out to breathe the air in the Park; but her nephew was, she knew, too busy to act as her squire, and no other companion was available. After hesitating between a walking dress and an afternoon home costume she chose the latter. All the agitation had worn off. She had dismissed the Swallowtail incident, with a feeling of compassion for the young lord, yet in the belief that a man so practical would soon find a means of consoling himself for the loss of one so much his senior. Moreover, whatever deeper feeling had stirred her mind, and for a time swept it with agitating force, she had been strong enough to overrule it. Her eyes were quiet and gentle as before, and if there was a little pallor in the face, that only added to its exquisite sweetness.

Strolling to the drawing-room, and feeling disinclined to read, she sat down at the piano, and began listlessly turning over some songs. She was not a brilliant musician, though her voice was clear and flexible, so that her songs were generally simple ones, more often chosen for their melody than their words. As she turned over the music, her eye, falling on a little song of Taddy Jobson’s which a friend had set to music, she almost involuntarily placed it before her, and, fingering the accompaniment, began in low notes to warble it forth. At any other time she would have passed a reflection, as became a lady of her staid age, on the foolishness of its sentiment, but singing it now, that idea did not occur to her. As she went on, her voice gained a singular strength and sweetness, and before she had done, she was throwing into her voice something more than the mere

feeling which is inspired by artistic enthusiasm.

It ran thus :—

LOVE IS BUT A LITTLE BOY.

I.

*Love is but a little boy,
O! Ho! Heigho!
Yet he causeth great annoy,
O! Ho! Heigho!
For his baby hand controls
Pigmy hearts and giant souls,
With his tiny dart transfixes
Earthborn dames and fairy pixies.
O! Ho! Heigho!
Love is strong and love is coy.
O! Ho! Heigho!
Love is pain and Love is joy!*

II.

*Love is but a little boy,
O! Ho! Heigho!
Yet he worketh great annoy,
O! Ho! Heigho!
Warriors bold and coward folk
Bend alike beneath his yoke:
Women's hearts are at his beck,
His foot is on the tyrant's neck.
O! Ho! Heigho!
Love is strong and Love is coy!
O! Ho! Heigho!
Love is pain and Love is joy!*

III.

*Love is but a little boy
O! Ho! Heigho!
Yet he causeth great annoy,
O! Ho! Heigho!
Love will reign or Love will go!
He can make or mar it so!
Kill or quicken with a breath,—
Love is life and Love is death.
O! Ho! Heigho!
Love can bind and Love can free,
O! Ho! Heigho!
Love what wilt thou do with me?*

Singing the last verse with the full *abandon* of one who believed herself to be alone, she was not aware that the door had been opened by Vance, and that Winnistoun, treated always as an intimate friend of the aunt and nephew, had softly entered, and, signing to the servant not to disturb her,

had closed the door and stood waiting the conclusion of her song. It ended, and she sat still on the music-stool, with her hands dropped in her lap, her eyes fixed upon the last words,

“*Love, what wilt thou do with me?*”

when suddenly she heard Winnistoun's deep voice, which startled, while it thrilled her with strange delight.

“Miss Jobson—*mille pardons!*—a forfeit! I never heard you sing before: and you have always declared you could not sing.”

She rose from the music-stool, with carnation in her cheeks, and turned to Winnistoun.

She was not angry—though she said:

“If you were not a very intimate friend, and a sort of *enfant perdu*, to whom all liberties are excused, I should be very angry with you. I will scold Vance—which I know is the best way of punishing *you*.”

“Forgive Vance,” said Winnistoun taking her proffered hand. “It was my fault. I would not let him interrupt what seemed to me to be a pretty conversation with your piano.”

She had quite recovered her self-possession, but being in a peculiar state of exaltation, she glanced at his face a moment to see whether there was any hidden meaning in his words. Winnistoun's face was too diplomatic a one to be read on so slight a matter. His keen eyes only scintillated with fun. He little knew how nearly he had hit the mark.

Yes: at her age she had been holding sentimental converse with her piano, and the soft, simple notes had spoken to her with a soothing and subliming sweetness.

Winnistoun's appearance now had something of the same effect. If she had been asked a minute before whether she would like to see him, she would have answered that he was the last person in the world she would wish to meet at the moment. Now that he was there, before her, with his grand head, his grave, dignified and yet always gay air (the extraordinary mixture of natures that was in him!) she felt an inexpressible surprise of happiness come over her, as if a cool draught had blown in gently from the hot life without.

"When I caught you, Miss Jobson," said he as they sat down, "you were singing words, light enough for a popular song and perhaps, to you, very silly. But oddly enough, as I heard *you* sing them they sent a thrill through me. Would you fancy *me*—grave old me—owning the little Bowman's fascinating power—bending to be his slave—and tremblingly asking of anybody the question—

"*Love, what wilt thou do with me?*"

As his intense gaze was fixed upon her, Miss Jobson did not look up, but frayed the trimmings on her dress with the fingers of her right hand. The other hand, with its simple jewels, lay listlessly beside her, on the half-arm of the easy chair in which she was seated.

"Hardly," she said in a deep earnest voice. "Your heart is too full of other people's loves and woes to leave room for any particular passion of your own. Is not that enough for one great mind?" and she turned her face up to his with such an ineffable fulness of calm, tender admiration, that Winnistoun felt as if an angel had come to say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

And so wonderfully elevated and sympathetic was this man's soul, that the evident simplicity and unworldliness and purity of her admiration, seemed to rebuke within him the sentiment he was dying to confess—of love for the woman who thus regarded him. She set before him an ideal which he would at the moment rather not have contemplated. She almost seemed to make a culprit of his brave, honest heart. He recovered himself before she had perceived his emotion.

"Ah! Miss Jobson," he said. "Spare me such words as these. I cannot, I do not—but more—alas! I *would* not deserve them!"

"*Would* not?"

"No—it is a paradox. To deserve them would be too great a sacrifice, would deprive me of the prize I would most dearly desire to win."

"Why—what can that be?" she said—but, even as she spoke, she coloured and trembled.

"Bertha Jobson—*your love!*"

He looked at her with his keen tender eyes!

It was then that she showed how the struggle she had had with her heart in those few hours in her room, had strengthened and prepared her. She glanced very gently at Winnistoun.

"Dear friend!" she said, with a tremulous but decided voice, "had you known all, you would never have let what you have now said escape your lips. To you at least, William Winnistoun, I can speak freely and frankly. We are near of an age. Our friendship is a very real one, a dear one. Your intimate relations with Taddy and myself, have been the happiest feature of my life in London—and I would not have them to cease, or even to be endangered. How much we owe to you—nay how much I, Bertha Jobson, owe to you—for the quickening influence of your mind upon my inferior intelligence, I cannot pretend to estimate. How deep the esteem—yes I will say the affection we both feel for you, I dare not trust myself to express. I speak to you more unaffectedly than to any human being. You may not have known that our ages are very nearly alike."

Winnistoun bowed his head.

"I did know."

"Well, that makes it more easy for me to talk to you. I had thought that long since within my heart, all the roots of sentimental affection had died out. I live for my few friends—I give them a true affection, but—nothing has entered into it of the passion—the sentiment—whatever you like to call it, which men and women call *love*. I am too old for that."

"Old?" he said, his face breaking into a wondrous smile. "Yours is the noblest youthfulness. And your heart is not withered—it is fresh and green as ever. Do not wrong it so."

She looked away.

"—My appeal to you," he went on, "is not that of young passion, which flames up and often goes down in ashes and dust. There is a steady glow that burns within me, hidden long, but deep and volcanic. I feel as if your love, your presence, your companionship, were something that would ennoble my life, and make it greater. What do you think is the life of a man, out of whose soul love is ever

flowing, while little or none ever enters in—whose heart yearning for the closest, deepest sympathy, must be content with receiving it in tiny rills and through conventional channels instead of its coming to him in a full, gushing torrent of pure affection from *one true heart*? You have felt, you say—but do you mean it?—that you can do without it; but for me, my heart thirsts for it, and in you I have found the Angel of the rock.”

Then Bertha Jobson clasped her hands together in an agony on her breast, and bowing her head, cried out—“O my God, what have I done?”

He had looked so winning and so noble, as he pleaded with such eloquent simplicity, and opened to her view a great heart full of tenderness and goodness, longing for something it needed for its very life.

And she could give him that something—or rather could have done, but for that fatal declaration to my Lord Swallowtail.

Winnistoun was startled and troubled by her words.

“Surely”—he began hurriedly—“surely—I—I have not come—too late!”

There was an anguish in his voice which went through her like sharp steel.

For a moment she looked at him. Her eyes were filling with tears. His grand features were clouded with pain, his teeth were set, his eyes were starting as he watched for the reply.

“O William—I dare not—I *cannot* answer!” and she hid her face from him.

Winnistoun was too delicately-minded to take advantage of this strange cry. It did not encourage him to a familiarity. He did not offer to take her hand.

There was a minute’s silence. They could almost hear each other’s heart beating. Then she rose. Her face was calm, and Winnistoun thought he had never seen it more beautiful. She held out her hand. He seized it and covered it with kisses. She did not withdraw it.

“Dear friend!” she said. “Yours is a greater mind than mine. If I told you that nothing I know of on earth could be dearer to me than your love, and yet that I must

make the sacrifice of that thing most dear—If I ask you to believe that the reason is one your own heart and judgment would approve, were it right that I should tell it to you—If I say that I shall treasure this hour as a memory, and as the beginning of a nearer and purer friendship—cannot you, with *your* mind, *your* strength, *your* gentleness and trust of love, do as much for me, and remaining as we are, let us be to each other still dear and true?”

His mind took in all the grandeur of the attitude she had assumed, as well as the greatness of the love she had demanded, and he bowed his head before her in gentle submission.

“Be it so!” he said solemnly. “It is martyrdom—but, for you I would die—and this still leaves me half a life.”

And with a gentle pressure of her hand, he was gone!

CHAPTER XLIV:

THE CUT DIRECT.

JUNE, 184-, was a month critical not only to the fortunes of Jobson and his aunt, but of the country. Lord Mewbourne's administration was in danger. There was a universal outcry against the Government. The Ministry had, some said, "been in too long:" "people were getting tired of a Whig Government:" "the other side ought to have a chance:" "that appointment of Twiggleshorpe's was a gross job:" "the Radicals were getting too strong and too daring:" was the sort of remark which the earnest political enquirer, anxious to learn the grounds of the general public uneasiness, gathered from the wise men who sat in council in the smoking rooms of the London clubs.

But there were in reality reasons more solid for the weakening of the Cabinet. These *cognoscenti* of the clubs may have become tired of everlasting getting up in the morning and reading in the newspapers that Lord Mewbourne in the Lords and Sir Humphrey Baldo in the Commons, continued to rise in their places to answer for the Ministry; but the truth was, that in the country the Ministry had given dissatisfaction, as at last any Ministry must do, to two classes of people: its political foes and its political followers. The former are always implacable, the latter are often skittish and untrustworthy. Reform had provoked reaction among moderate thinkers, and excited among the extreme Reformers desires and hopes which had not been fulfilled. The forward expressions and earnest programmes of the latter, were skilfully used by the Tories to awaken the fears of the former. A cry was got up and sedulously fanned that the Ministry was coming too much under the influence of the Radicals—"the head was

being moved by the tail"—an expression that is sometimes used to illustrate an absurdity by persons who forget that that is a scientific and rational peculiarity in the case of propellers. So that in the month of June, when sessional legislation, as a rule, is sleepily drawing to a close, through long night-sittings, and every one thinks that political excitement may be soon fairly postponed over the shooting and hunting season, the country was suddenly roused, by decreasing majorities in the House, to the sense that the Ministry was in danger, and that any day might find it the subject of a motion of want of confidence.

To Jobson the month was also critical. His book on "Privilege in England," written in a strong, sharp, biting tone, addressed to "Electors and Non-electors of the United Kingdom," dealing with an unsparing hand with the social and political anomalies of the constitution, of the franchise, of government civil and municipal, of classes and interests, burst like a petard in the very middle of society and politics. In ten days it had gone through an edition, and for some weeks the printers and publishers could scarcely keep up the supply. At the same time Jobson, entrusted with one of the most important of the forgery cases, had conducted the prosecution with a dexterity and force that won applause from all sides.

No one would have been astonished had the young man's head been turned by these successes. But like all such successes they brought their own antidote against too extreme an intoxication. *The Post*, in articles of a new style, by a vigorous but not very cultivated writer, who did not hesitate to spice his rhetoric with the rudest personalities, attacked Jobson with vulgar acrimony. His grammar, his style, his logic, his facts, were all subjected, by a person who sinned himself in every respect, to keen analysis, and declared to be "worthy of a man educated in a common school in the backwoods of Canada." This was easy enough to bear, since Jobson could lay to his heart the consoling thought that his book was more widely read than these articles, and contained in itself the refutation of the calumnies of his ingenious critic. But it was not alone in opposition reviews and journals that Jobson found critics.

Messrs. Pillbury and Company's organs opened fire with all the more effect that they were friendly to his own party, and the *Prospective Review* and the *Censor* agreed in declaring that never had a more confused jumble of political ideas and foolish enthusiasm been put forward by any sane person under the disguise of a scientific treatise on polity. Jobson was taken in front and flank and rear. His strong expressions were exaggerated on the opposite side from policy, in order to aggravate the fears of the moderate party, and rebuked from his own side as extreme and "enthusiast."

It was getting near the end of the season, and one of the latest great assemblies was Lady Cainham's annual ball at the house in Cavendish Square. Lady Cainham was a favourite in society, notwithstanding her middle-class origin; her son was a handsome, promising, and wealthy peer. The old Lord's investments had been more than clever—they had been masterly. In the course of his circuit rounds as a leader and a Chief Justice he had never failed to keep his eyes open on the progress of certain towns, and to form shrewd forecasts of the direction in which they would develop. Consequently his investments in green fields had turned into golden-rented streets of houses and factories, and his son enjoyed the fruits of his father's shrewdness in an income of forty thousand a year. The mouth of even an English aristocrat waters at these figures, which were immensely appreciated by fond mammas and intriguing dowagers. Nothing therefore could exceed the brilliancy of this gathering of the highest English Society. The leaders of both parties, the *crème de la crème* of aristocracy, the fairest flowers in the gorgeous bouquet of the season's *belles*, the men of wit and fashion, crowded in the magnificent *salons*, and trod on each other's toes and trains in the splendid staircase and noble Italian hall. General Jobson was a favourite of Lady Cainham's, who had often seen him as a boy and youth at Cainham, and he was present with his sister and nephew. Lord Swallowtail was there, and Mr. Childerley and his daughter. The dancing went on in a pavilion which had been erected for the purpose over a part of the garden approached by large glass doors from one of the drawing-rooms.

Mr. and Miss Childerley had arrived late, and were standing near Lord Mewbourne, who, having exchanged a few words with the Tory Nestor, the noble Duke of Pentland, was speaking to the Whig banker, when Thaddæus Jobson, with his aunt on his arm, approached the party. A cordial greeting passed between the ladies. Miss Childerley received Jobson with commonplace affability and readily accepted his arm for a slow dance, while Swallowtail undertook to escort Miss Jobson to a room where Lady Pilkington had agreed to await her. His manner to Bertha was unchanged and on her part there was no reserve. Lord Mewbourne bowed gallantly to Miss Jobson.

"You do not dance, Miss Jobson?" he enquired.

"Not now," she said, "though I am fond of it. There are years of discretion, you know, and mine arrived some time since."

"Would that they had not arrived to you," he replied with a brilliant smile on his face, the smile that had conquered so many!—"and that they *had* come to your nephew!"

"Why," she said, "Lord Mewbourne! You talk like Lord Swallowtail. What sin has my nephew committed?"

"Two—one that of being in advance of his time, and the other of not having the wit to conceal it."

As this moment Lady Cainham approached and the Premier turned to her. With her was a tall and elegant woman, dressed in simple, yet perfect, taste, which set off to a marvel her haughty carriage, her elegant *embonpoint*, and her dark but florid complexion.

"A friend, my Lord Mewbourne—with whom you can exercise your faultless French—my old and esteemed friend, Madame de Lossy."

"Ah!" cried Lord Mewbourne. "De Lossy was first secretary of the French Embassy at Vienna, when I occupied the same post in the English *Chancellerie*. At that time my friend was unmarried and a misogynist. I do not now wonder he was charmed out of the disease."

Bertha Jobson looked hard at Madame de Lossy, and would indeed, but for the Minister's presence, have addressed her, but Madame de Lossy studiously kept her

eyes away, and, joining in a lively conversation with Lord Mewbourne in French, turned her fine shoulder on Lord Swallowtail's companion. At this moment an exclamation from Lord Swallowtail caused Bertha to look to the door through which Lord Cainham was coming with a lady on his arm. She was about twenty years of age, and the splendour of her beauty, set off by a magnificent dress of light blue satin trimmed with gold, and a circlet on her brow containing a diamond over which drooped some snowy white ostrich feathers, which seemed to have been dipped in a golden bath, attracted the eye of every one present. The room was very small.

"Heloïse!" cried Bertha, joyfully, putting out her hand—

"*Pardon!*" said an imperious voice, as Madame de Lossy's train swept round between her daughter and Miss Jobson. "*Milord, j'ai l'honneur vous présenter Mademoiselle de Lossy.*"

The Premier bowed low, and Heloïse, taking no notice of Bertha Jobson, entered into the conversation.

Swallowtail, who had watched the incident with a sagacious eye, immediately turned round with his companion and said :

"Let us have a look at the dancers."

He saw a flush on Bertha's cheek and her hand trembled on his arm.

"Who is that beauty?" he asked.

"Mademoiselle de Lossy. She lives with her mother at Ludlow, where we were intimate friends. They taught Taddy French," replied Miss Jobson simply.

"It would be worth ten guineas a lesson, from such lips," said Swallowtail with unusual gallantry.

"We paid one," retorted Bertha, "but then the arrangement was a business one and not sentimental."

Swallowtail became red in his turn. Meantime Jobson and Miss Childerley who had been going through a sedate quadrille together, came through the door from the ball-room. Miss Childerley was tall, with dark eyes, projecting brow, a pale complexion, and a somewhat pensive and even thoughtful face. Swallowtail looked particularly at her and at Jobson. Her hand was placed listlessly on our hero's arm, and he was talking to her, with little animation.

"When do you think that those two will bring matters to a crisis?" said his lordship, directing Bertha's attention to her friends.

"I cannot say," replied she. "Neither of them is very enthusiastic. Taddy," she said, "Madame de Lossy and her daughter are in the boudoir."

Jobson's face became animated at once.

"How curious! I am delighted. You must make their acquaintance, Miss Childerley. Miss Heloïse is charming."

He was going on, when Swallowtail seized his arm.

"Stay, Jobson—a word."

He took him aside.

"Take my advice; don't approach Madame de Lossy, just now. She has just cut your aunt rudely, and Mewbourne is there. Has there been any ground for coolness?"

"Cut my Aunt Bertha? Their best friend in the world? Impossible, my dear Swallowtail! I don't know how they got here—French people, out of a small cottage at Ludlow."

"Well here they are—magnificent women, and magnificently dressed—and enrapturing Mewbourne on the ground of an early friendship with the defunct de Lossy. Don't tempt your fate. There is something the matter."

"Well," said Jobson, "I will find it out, my friend."

*"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his desert is small,
Who fears to put it to the touch
And win or lose it all!"*

"Just like him!" said Swallowtail, to himself, as he turned away with Miss Jobson on his arm, and Jobson, escorting Miss Childerley, took his course. Mr. Childerley was still in the circle around Lord Mewbourne and their hostess. His daughter joined him. He was anxious that she should be presented to people who seemed to be so distinguished. He whispered in Lady Cainham's ear.

"Delighted," she said; and she presented Miss Childerley to Madame de Lossy. Jobson, standing beside her, sought first to catch the eye of the mother and bowed. Madame de Lossy, drawing herself up, stared at him an instant, with

a slight contraction of the eyes as if she were short-sighted, and turning away resumed her conversation with Lord Mewbourne.

In spite of himself the colour rushed to Jobson's cheek. Miss Childerley squeezed his arm.

"Why, I thought they were friends of yours," she whispered.

"So I thought," said Jobson, biting his lips. "But it appears one cannot be certain of one's friends."

His eye caught that of Heloïse de Lossy, whose soft, dove-like glance rested upon him for a moment, with a strange mixture of *hauteur* and kindness. He drew himself up and ventured to bow stiffly. She just inclined her head. A crimson tint passed over her face, and left it pale again.

"Heloïse," said Madame de Lossy in French, "his lordship desires that you would walk a quadrille with him. I will await you in the supper-room. Lord Cainham, will you give me your arm?"

They swept past Jobson into the ballroom.

Madame de Lossy, who had been content to live with her daughter the quiet life of Ludlow, and to aid her *ménage* by giving lessons in French to some of its wealthier and more aristocratic families, now turned out to be not without resources. Unhappy causes had led to a separation from M. de Lossy, when Heloïse was about six years of age. He had died not long after, the victim of his follies, and the proceeds of the very small estate left by him, had been sacredly preserved by the faithful mother for her daughter's benefit. They had been living thriftily on the small income which had been settled on Marie Lefleur at her marriage with Monsieur de Lossy. She was therefore enabled to present her daughter, in fitting style to London society. Lady Cainham who had formed for her brilliant and elegant neighbours a close and real friendship, was only too glad to be the means of introducing to the fashionable world so clever a woman and a girl so sweet and fair.

Miss Jobson and Master Thaddæus could hardly abstain on their way home in the carriage from speaking of the extraordinary conduct of their friends. The General

had listened attentively. He had seen and admired Madame de Lossy and her daughter at Ludlow, and had pointed them out to Lady Pilkington at the ball.

"Oh!" cried the intelligent lady. "This looks like a case of foreign adventure. Bertha idolises those people, and I can understand now why your nephew is always so romantic about them."

"Don't be afraid, Lady Pilkington—I have given him notice that if even he ever thinks of a French woman I'll drum him out of the regiment—not a farthing from me to a *parley-vous*, I can tell you."

Lady Pilkington, when she heard Bertha Jobson's story, was also indignant.

"In English society, my dear, no lady ever *cuts* another. This Madame de Lossy is a French woman, and that accounts for a good deal. But there is something behind all this, as sure as you are sitting there. I shall go and ask Lady Cainham what it means."

She called on Lady Cainham, and afterwards at Arlington Street.

"I was right, Bertha. There *is* something behind the impertinence of the French woman. She speaks of Taddy Jobson to Lady Cainham as if he had behaved dishonourably to her daughter."

"O-oh!"

"Well!" cried the General's lady, nodding her head sagaciously, "young fellows like Taddy, when they are *learning French*, my dear, from pretty women, don't themselves know how far they go, you know. This is French *pique—alias* revenge. But I have something more important to tell you. Lady Cainham tells me her son is madly in love with the girl, and she has already refused him once. Hoity-toity people indeed these French adventuresses, but they will soon find out that pride goeth before a fall. Don't trouble your head about them any more."

CHAPTER XLV.

A SLAP IN THE FACE.

THE Ministry was safe for the recess. A half-hearted attack made by the Tories had not succeeded. The majority was only eleven, but it was enough. Lord Mewbourne's opponents had not selected a happy occasion for challenging his power. A measure, giving a very small quota of municipal reform, but inserting that terrible political force "the thin edge of the wedge," was vigorously opposed by the Tories and some of the more moderate Whigs. But the majority of the Reform party backed up the Cabinet, and carried the measure. The prestige of the Government had however received a fatal blow. Lord Codlin, a sort of aristocratic dog in the manger, who sat on the cross benches, had attacked the Ministers with his usual impartial severity, Lord Codlin was a cynic. Cynicism in political life is sometimes valuable, in small doses. It adds an acid and a force to a real practical ability: it gives a flavour to a brilliant statesmanship. But in Lord Codlin cynicism predominated over every virtue. He was a Diogenes. He snarled at everybody. He had held high positions, but in spite of very considerable talents had succeeded in none. He had become a free lance, and attacked whatever Ministry was in power with admirable indifference. His keen critical intellect, and large knowledge, enabled him always to do it with effectiveness. His criticism acted as a solvent. When the Tories were in power, he, by birth, tradition and natural tendency, a Whig, treated them as knaves: when the Whigs were in power he ridiculed them as fools. His speeches against Lord Mewbourne's administration had an immense effect. He was as it were kicking a man who was already sliding down hill. The debates in both Houses had prolonged the session. The

12th of August had come, and yet the town was full. Few political celebrities, or *quidnuncs*, or the hangers-on of parties, were disposed to leave a scene at once so lively and so interesting. In six months the Ministry would certainly fall and then would be a scramble for office. Continental tours were abjured, and peers and members of Parliament stayed at home to nurse the constituencies they controlled or represented. The birds on many an estate flew about happy and undisturbed. Their enemies had other game to shoot at.

On the morning of the day which sends a flutter through every sportsman's heart, Jobson with a flushed face and agitated manner entered Winnistoun's chambers. Only the night before he had held with his friend a serious conversation. The season had been to him long and arduous. At its close, he felt that he had made a great advance. His name was on every one's lips. For that alone, how many men would give their eyes or even their lives! In the clubs, in political associations through the country, by sturdy leaders of reform in the great towns, by old-fashioned country gentlemen of a patriotic turn of mind, the mention of his name was received with very different emotions. On all hands he was acknowledged to be a "terribly clever fellow"—a phrase which expressed exactly the feeling of moderate thinkers with regard to his powerful attacks on cherished institutions, and of hearty reformers and radicals respecting the effectiveness of his charge upon the enemy's front. Single-hearted and earnest, and as we have seen in private life, an ever gentle, somewhat too impulsive and generous soul, the force and enthusiasm of his nature, acting through the natural brilliancy of his talents, made him outside an object of fear. And fear is a parent of hatred.

However he had no reason to be dissatisfied with his position, on the night of the 11th of August. Society had accepted him as the future son-in-law of a worthy Whig, and while the men at Brooks's shrugged their shoulders at his book, they consoled themselves with the idea, "He will marry twenty or thirty thousand a year, and he's a d——d clever fellow; he will sow his wild oats, and settle down to be a staunch Whig and an ornament to the party."

On the morning of the 12th he entered Winnistoun's chamber with a letter in his hand.

"Hallo!" cried the barrister. "You are over-working yourself. Your cheek is hectic. It is well that you are so soon to get into Yorkshire. A week's shooting will set you up."

"I am not going to Yorkshire," replied Jobson gloomily. "Read that letter."

Winnistoun hastily cast his eyes over a letter written on paper of a business-like blue, in the square post form and size, and which had been folded and sealed by a wafer, like a claim for a banker's commission or a receipt for a bundle of drafts. As he read, his brow contracted and he drew his lips tightly together.

"A dismissal," he said, "as clear as daylight. No wonder you are flushed. What does this mean?"

Jobson shrugged his shoulders.

The letter ran thus:—

127A, *Park Lane*,
August 11th, 18—.

My dear Sir,

I regret to inform you that circumstances have occurred which render it necessary for me to proceed to the Continent on private business, and that I am therefore compelled to break up the arrangements I had made for receiving a party of friends at Wringthorpe. I expect to be absent for some time and Miss Childerley will accompany me. She is writing to Miss Jobson to the same effect by the same post. I shall hope to have the pleasure of receiving you at some future time.

Wishing you a happy holiday and every success in life,

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

To Thaddæus Jobson, Esq.,

A. P. CHILDERLEY.

etc., etc., etc.

"Men are not in the habit of writing to future sons-in-law in such a style as this. How has he written to you before?"

"In terms of the kindest intimacy—'My dear Jobson'

and 'Yours ever sincerely'—how 'sincerely' and how 'ever' you can now judge. What does it mean?"

"Childerley is a very stiff man and a very proud one. He is a thorough Whig—a moneyed man with aristocratic ambitions. But he is honourable—he is under an obligation to you such as no mere political or social differences could nullify. I know that he, in common with Swallowtail and many other of your old-fashioned friends, regard your too successful book as a mistake. But here is a man who has openly spoken of you as a possible son-in-law, dismissing you like a lacquey. There is something behind this. Come out in the garden.

Jobson and his friend were soon strolling up and down the latter's favourite promenade by the river.

"Jobson," said Winnistoun, after walking by his friend for some minutes in silence, while his face and brow showed that he was engaged in deep thought. "I say again there is more in this than meets the eye, as the City men say. Either someone has been traducing you, or Miss Childerley finds that she prefers another."

"Or both perhaps!" cried Jobson affecting to laugh.

"Or both—quite on the cards. I may tell you now that I knew and heard that Childerley was very angry about your book, and expressed himself so, openly at Brooks's."

"Pshaw!" cried Jobson, the colour flushing in his face again. "Do you suppose that all the Childerleys, and all the heiresses, and the offer of all the close boroughs in England would have led me to change one word, or one stop of a book which I wrote from conviction and duty. If this comes only of that, I tell you, Winnistoun, I don't care a pin about it. I wish you could convince me it were so."

"Jobson, you have only said what I should have expected of you. Your book is the book of an honest man, in advance of his time, and for my part I thank and honour you for writing it. I do not though, all the same, conceal from myself that in publishing these views, you have not improved your position."

"Why?" cried Jobson impetuously. "Am I to do everything with the single aim of advancing Thaddæus Jobson in life?"

"So the world thinks—or at least its criticism and judgments usually involve that. The man who is too earnest and does not run with the times—'wants tact' they say—or is 'impracticable.' Remember there is some truth in it—he is out of joint with his era. He cannot go in the same harness with the majority. You, a friend and a sort of adopted child of the Whigs, have shaken yourself free of Whig politics, which are pre-eminently the politics of staid and sober brains. You blaze and explode and scintillate among a lot of old quiet-going people, and they naturally start and utter cries of alarm. You are, in truth, A GENIUS. Genius and Whiggery are as incompatible as fire and water. Tories do appreciate genius and use it. Radicals worship it—it is essential to novelty: but to the Whig it is *nehushtan*—a piece of brass."

"But you agreed last night the book has been an immense success."

"It is a literary success, but for you a political blunder. For that very reason I applaud it. It is a book of the future. It is earnest and true—that is another of its faults. To kill an idea among these shop-keeping, trading, matter-of-fact English, you have only to label it as 'sentimental.' You may cut off the locks of the greatest giant in literature or politics by dubbing him an 'enthusiast.' Force and sense for the English, wit and brilliancy for Frenchmen and fools. Sober 'common-sense,' that is to say, ideas at once staid and vulgar, that most commends itself to the average British judgment."

"Why do they read the book?"

"It is racy and brilliant. The public enjoys the form, it rejects the substance. But no matter. The book is a good book and is doing good, and will bring you in due time its reward. That however is not the cause of this rebuff. You have had no misunderstanding with Miss Childerley?"

"None whatever," said Jobson.

"Will you frankly open your heart to me? Have you ever avowed any feeling for her beyond that of friendship?"

"Never."

"Did you feel it? Is this a blow that wounds deeper than the outside?"

"Well," replied Jobson, "I confess—I mean she was very sensible and agreeable and all that—and—and well you know, my dear fellow—of course there was a certain sentiment—I mean I didn't dislike her."

"Hum," said Winnistoun looking straight before him. "I suppose at all events we may say that you had no repugnance to Miss Childerley?"

"On the contrary—but don't ask me to analyse my feelings. I was at any rate going down to Wringthorpe to ascertain what my feelings were. I never would have married her had I not felt I could love her."

"*Bien*. Thank God, then, it is no worse. It is puncture of the skin, and the vitals are uninjured. None the less it is a serious and awkward affair. You cannot possibly ask either Childerley or Miss Childerley what is the matter. He gives you no opening. He shuts up his house and goes away to the Continent. He wishes you 'every success in life.' There is a fine flavour of Whiggery about that. It is *de haut en bas*, and confoundedly impertinent. For the moment I cannot help you to a solution of the problem, but I advise you to keep the matter perfectly quiet. Call at the house to-morrow as if nothing had happened: go in if the opportunity offers—"

"No," said Jobson, "I will not do that. When a man who is as intimate with me as Childerley writes me such a letter as this, he wishes me to understand that intimacy is at an end. I will not force his hand—the less will I do so, that Mr. and Miss Childerley declare themselves to be under a life-long obligation to me. I shall not abuse my position—nor will I run the risk of a rebuff. I lose the chance of a seat in Parliament, but I am free now to seek one from the people whose interests I have at heart."

"Shake hands, my friend—you have nothing to fear. Let Childerley go to—the House of Lords."

A few days after this conversation Bertha Jobson at the breakfast table was glancing over the announcements in the *Post*, when she uttered an exclamation, so loud and sharp that both the General and Jobson started in alarm.

“Why, good gracious, my dear Bertha, what’s the matter?”

“Listen : ‘We understand that a marriage has been arranged between Lord Swallowtail, Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and Miss Emmeline Isabel Childerley, only daughter and heiress of Mr. A. P. Childerley, M.P., of Wringthorpe Hall, Yorkshire.’”

Jobson looked at his aunt, and got up and left the room.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE GENERAL PRACTISES ECONOMY.

IN the dull grey pallor of the breaking dawn of a June morning, a man was walking slowly along Clarges Street towards Mayfair. His hat was off, for the air was sultry, his attitude was one either of despondency or weariness. The face of this man was pale and powerful. In the thinning and grizzly hair, the knotted brows, the nostrils that seemed to have been drawn up, as the petals of a flower shrink from age or drought; in the lines beginning to gather round the eyes, the veins in the large temples, the signs of coming wrinkles at the corners of the lips, and the firm, close way in which these were pressed together, above all in the fine, delicate, half-painful, half-supernatural intellectualism which played all over his features—there were the written evidences of thought, and emotion, and anxiety, as well as of the pride and consciousness of power.

More than four years have passed, and this is Thaddæus Jobson. He is going home from a late sitting of the House of Commons, wherein he represents the great borough of Linchester.

Life with him during the years in which we have lost sight of him has been toilsome, grave, active, consuming. You see it in his face—in the slight—very slight—stoop of the burdened shoulders. This is a man who has thought—and therefore has suffered.

—True thought brings suffering—for it enlightens: and enlightenment is the knowledge of the bad along with the good: the discovery of evil as well as the illumination of truth. Jobson had lived in the world, not to be the involuntary victim of its moods, but to study, and, if might be, to control, it. And he studied it, as he persuaded himself, with the noble motive of bettering it. But, had he ever taken a moment to question the Pythoness who sits in

the inmost sanctuary of every human heart, she would have told him that he also studied life in order to master it. The masterful spirit, which so seldom gets its way, was strong in this man. He felt the influence of the energy which had made him utter those strange words to Lord Swallowtail—" *vis major contra vires minores.*" To be a leader, to wield power, always certainly with a high ideal of the end to be won, this—which indeed is only the spirit vulgarly called AMBITION—was secretly—one might even say *unconsciously*—the propelling force of Jobson's life. Not the only force—because Jobson was a man of religion, and religion disconcerts all other forces in a human character. His was neither a religion of faith nor of superstition—but a deep and silent conviction of a personal God and of an attainable goodness. His outlook of life was not bounded by time: he had an old-fashioned belief that its ultimate and best development was beyond. He said so—and every time he owned to this belief he proved that ambition within him had not all the mastery; for every such confession brought down upon him the cynical contempt of many whose applause or favour were necessary to his triumph.

One principle or feature of this religion of Jobson's was candour; and candour is the parent of infinite enmities.

His life was so full of work and ideas that he had no time for self-analysis. Introspection is the amusement or the employment of the thoughtful idler—commonly called *Philosopher*. When a man is at once writer, thinker, politician, man of society, head of family, churchman, he cannot stop to check and count the straws which float upon the currents of his ideas, or to trace the course of these currents and their eddies.

With Jobson, sincerity of heart, a pure instinct, high principle regulated a course which on the whole was evenly run in the right direction. But it was not a course of reflection. It was a course of action. Innumerable errors must enter into such a life as this, deranging its current and sullyng the purity of its stream. It has been admitted by the Casuists that it is immoral for a man to undertake too much; but they supply no standard, or even reputed,

measure of strength or opportunity. Working for three men, Jobson remained generous, bold, honest—as we have seen him before, with the fine daring which, successful, is “genius,” and, failing, is “folly.”

He was a radical and yet he was clerical; he was a churchman and yet he was a free-thinker. If men will be such fools as not to be either enthusiasts or atheists they must take the consequences—the bigots and the agnostics, who tear each other's throats, will fall equally foul of him who is neither the one nor the other.

Jobson had been in Parliament for four sessions. The manufacturing population of Linchester, in Lancashire, had picked him out for his abilities, his advanced views, and his pluck, and had sent him to Parliament with a *carte-blanche* to think and act as he thought best. Had no constituency been found ready to grant so wide a confidence, Jobson would not have been in the House. He was not of the stuff that is to be drilled by party leaders to march or countermarch in party squadrons. And by his constituents—who knew him well, for he freely opened himself to them—he was beloved. They stood to their choice. The shafts of ridicule which were cast at him by party journalists, and by jealous quill-drivers, hard up for something to practise upon, were caught in the breasts of his brave constituents and worn by them as honours.

Anyone might have been proud of Jobson's position, but it made our hero infinitely lonely. To do what reason and conscience tell a man is right, and to do it bravely and well, and yet to feel that the greater part of the world regards him as a fool for his pains—to know that even his “best friends” are silent about him, and his enemies jubilant over his “follies”—is indeed to lead a solitary life—to be driven back upon himself. And to Jobson, with his immense capacity for loving and being loved, the result of the work to which sense of duty and pride of ambition together impelled him, was a hard and awful experience—born with unflagging courage, but sapping the vitals of life.

He had arrived opposite a small mansion in Great Charles Street, and, staying his steps for a minute, he threw a timid glance up at the windows. A sigh, half-checked, escaped

him. His wife and children were sleeping there. No other human soul knew or suspected the feeling which prompted that abortive sigh. He was proud—and his deepest wounds were never shown to friend or foe.

On that morning when Jobson heard of Miss Childerley's engagement he had calmly gone away and examined his heart, and found with certainty that he had not loved her. The review was a very quiet and simple one—and then he dismissed the whole affair. He would not speak of it either to Bertha or Winnistoun. He foresaw that it would exercise a great influence on his career, and he was thankful to be liberated from a strong temptation. Had he married Mr. Childerley's daughter he would never have been so free as he was now. He must have been caught in the Whig net, and, flounder as he might, he could not have escaped. To the loss of Miss Childerley he found he was really indifferent. But his pride had been wounded—his faith in gentlemanly honour and human gratitude had been shaken—his trust in friendship had received a severe blow. He was too proud to ask the meaning of the mystery. Mr. Childerley and Lord Swallowtail became to him as people he had never known. They, on their part, having acted from motives they deemed to be honourable, were, from the same motives, silent about Jobson to all the world and made no effort at explanations. The influence which had allied him to the Whigs was thus withdrawn. The repulsion of outraged pride was excited. It was natural that Jobson should follow more freely the bent of his independent nature and become a more outspoken Liberal than ever. He published another book reflecting severely on the Whigs—their journals castigated him without mercy—and the breach was complete. Though he sat behind the leaders of the party in the House of Commons, they looked at him askance, hardly recognised his alliance, tried to suppress his activities, and treated him with cold disdain. It would have been wonderful if the sarcastic power within him could have remained quiescent in such circumstances. It glowed and sometimes blazed. The sparks therefrom burned deep, for he was able now to appeal to the world. Men read his books wherever English was read, and thoughtful Liberals in other

countries rendered them into their own tongues for the enlightenment of other races. But the manner and matter of these writings were such as to draw down upon them everywhere vehement and angry criticisms. The old-fashioned world does not like to be set right by young thinkers. Jobson perhaps did not reflect how often good ideas like good wine need to be cellared a long time before the vintage excellence comes out. There is hardly any crime an age will not forgive a man sooner than that of lecturing and correcting it. Jobson's tone and style were not really the signs of conceit. He was a strong thinker and a ready one. His mind was disciplined and his memory full of information. The directness and ease of his thought gave him confidence in his own conclusions which he expressed in a clear, sharp-cut style. His boldness and his lucidity were equally displeasing to those of opposite views, who found themselves savagely attacked by a cruel master of literary fence; while many even of those who were friendly to the ideas, disliked the man because he was so clever and so confident.

Genius nowadays, as often before, has to approach the world with cap in hand and a conciliatory address, and a knee used to bending, if it wish a contemporary recognition: or else it must fight—fight unweariedly, until men are forced to submit to its tyrannic sway. A man named Disraeli had recognised that fact and had fought and was fighting his way to victory with grim resolve, at the time when Jobson too was hard beset and sturdily winning his ground foot by foot.

But in this fight our hero was hampered by one disability—principle. He wanted to win for truth. He wanted to do the right. His honour he hung up within his mind as a bright silver shield that should ever be a mirror of purity, and be kept unsullied. He knew that he was sincere, but his enemies said he was a “prig” (that is, a self-satisfied humbug)—a “hypocrite”—or, worst and basest of all, a “mountebank”—a professional poser.

At this very time in London, a loving hand had been tracing for loving eyes far away a sketch of Jobson's situation. There was another title in the Jobson family. Sir

Arthur Jobson, Prime Minister of Canada, was in London on a political embassy to the Home Government. The sensible, noble-looking, fine-mannered man had made a good impression on official circles. His moderation commended him to English political society—which esteems moderation above genius—and wisely. In politics moderation—another name for sagacious mediocrity—has in the long run done more for the world than genius; for mediocrity is for everyday work and genius for great crises.

“—Our dear son gives me more and more pleasure the more I study his character—and oddly too, more and more anxiety. How broad and free and noble his views are! He breathes a high, pure atmosphere, and his pulse is full and strong. His conversation is most brilliant—he is full of enthusiasm. He is *too* generous—bold even to rashness. I ventured gently to hint this to him the other night. I had been at the House listening to a debate on the ballot—which is pushed forward just now by one or two philosophical radicals as a panacea for electoral corruption. Taddy’s speech I thought admirable in its form—eloquent—closely reasoned—quite refreshing after some of the feeble and bombastic arguments which proceeded from his opponents. But he was not content with defending his ground. He went farther. He hinted at a larger extension of the franchise—a wider and more thorough education of the people—the freeing of land, and other revolutionary measures—tending heaven only knows how and whither! Such a speech, especially from a young man, with no great social or political position, was coldly received—nay, the House sneered. They spoiled some of his best periods with angry or ridiculous outcries—and he sat down with scarcely a cheer. I was astounded at his confidence. He came to me in the gallery with a smiling face.

“‘Well, dear father,’ he said, ‘you see one prophesies in vain. You have seen me fighting with the beasts at Ephesus.’

“I said nothing at the time. My heart was full—and I am afraid my eyes too. Near us, in the Peers’ Gallery, was sitting Lord Cainham, a most amiable and accomplished

young nobleman, who is barely civil to Taddy, though, for the old family acquaintance sake, he has received me with kindest consideration. Lady Pilkington hinted to me that there had been some difficulty between the young men, through a lady—a French girl—Mademoiselle de Lossy—of whom you remember hearing so much from Bertha. I don't care to enquire into these things—young men will be young men. But Lord Cainham said to me the first time I saw him :

“‘I suppose you know that your son and I are not as good friends as we used to be. He has taken such a revolutionary tinge that it is not possible for us to consort together with any comfort. So we have quietly dropped off from one another. I wish you could give him some good advice. He is ruining great opportunities. With his abilities discreetly used he could be almost anything he chose.’

“These words of Lord Cainham's came back to me, as he glanced at Taddy after hearing his remark. There was a sort of contempt in his lordship's face, and I saw that Taddy noticed it—but his look remained as serene as before. He either has a marvellous command of himself, or is supremely good-natured, or, as his critics put it in the press—though it is hardly probable that you or I, dearest, would he inclined to admit it—‘conceited.’ The cool indifference with which he treats his numerous and active critics—throwing their slanders into the fire without reading them, or reading them without sign of the slightest emotion, proves that he has that most valuable quality of a public man—not to be thin-skinned. He never retorts on them—and that makes them more angry than ever.

“On our way home from the House I ventured gently to remonstrate with him about the unnecessary violence of his speech. I told him I was informed on all hands that his parts were brilliant and his opportunities of the first order, but that his extreme views had begot in political circles a doubt of the sedateness of his judgment—that in England the surest way to success was to cherish a reputation for sound sense, *etc.*, *etc.* My homily was calmly listened to, my man now and then as I waxed warm pressing my arm, but

at the end he suddenly stands still in the street—Piccadilly—opposite to the Green Park, where we were then arrived.

“ ‘Sir,’ he said to me, ‘can you be alive to the real tendency of all you are saying to me? Here you are, most kindly and by very tender implication, but in effect, blaming me for being too plain-spoken, honest and sincere. You are taking sides, sir, with other of my friends—who I think can scarcely persuade themselves I am not a madman—or at least have not a screw loose somewhere, and who are always preaching up to me the virtue of *discretion*. Now, you must forgive me, dear father—what you call *discretion*, involves nothing less in my case than cowardice and hypocrisy. You would have me—possessed by certain ideas which I feel called upon to expound, because I am persuaded they are true and are to be the principles of the next generation—suppress them, so that I might, by pretending to beliefs and principles which I do not hold, immediately advance myself, Thaddæus Jobson, to some high position of statesmanship. I will own to you that I am ambitious—nay more, am confident that my friends do not mistake in supposing me to have the power—if I had the tact and chose to exercise it—of acquiring high office—but, whatever the development of the future might bring forth, I can only do it at the present time, sir, at the expense of sincerity, of honesty, of honour, and, last but not least, of Christian duty. My candid friends, of whom I have a great surplusage, will tell you that I have nothing so important or so new to say that I should imperil what promises to be a brilliant career, by undertaking the *rôle* of a prophet. It may be so. I am too conscious of my own insufficiency to assume such a *rôle*: but I am determined to live up to and to act upon my beliefs, and I will not play the hypocrite or the courtesan even to become Prime Minister.’

“I folded him in my arms—there in the street. It was past midnight.

“ ‘My boy,’ I cried, ‘thou dost rebuke thine own father. Forgive me. Thou art a truer and nobler man than I. I need rise to a higher level to understand thee!’

“ ‘Nay, dear father,’ he replied gently. ‘You put me to the blush. I deserve not your praise. I am very weak. It needs no great strength of mind to do one’s duty. The path is clear and open, and only has to be followed. It is your able men, your men of genius, who cozen the world, that require to be cleverly and profoundly cunning in devices to deceive their generation. I live for the future—they for the present.’

“So, dear Marian, we must take our dear boy as God has given him to us. An he be a fool, as they even call him here, he is a noble one. He is indeed too genuine and generous for his age. Read this to our friend Roger—he will be delighted with it, and perhaps may recognise therein the fruits of some of his own teaching.”

From this account it will be seen that our hero was playing a true and a solitary rôle, to the vexation of his friends and the scorn of his enemies. He was suffering from the common lot of genius, *not to be understood*—as we see in the two highest examples, those of Socrates and Christ: and the most painful part of that lot is the cold unsympathy or the plain contempt of a man’s friends.

But, few men of genius have been so favourably placed for following their own bent as Jobson. He had married a lady of fortune, and had succeeded to a considerable estate. General Sir Harry Jobson had now for four years lain in his grave. His manner of exit from the world was characteristic. A year after Jobson’s disappointment with Miss Childerley, the General became a prey to a disease which was painful and dangerous. It gave him plenty of time to arrange his affairs. He made an elaborate will beginning with the name of God and ending with Harry Jobson. Thereby, after Vance had been comfortably provided for, and a handsome gift left to poor old Major Tolboys, who shortly thereafter drank himself to death with it, the property was divided into two equal halves, one of which went to his beloved sister Bertha for her life, with succession to the children of his brother Arthur Cainham, and the other moiety was given without reserve to his nephew Thaddæus Jobson.

He economised to the last—and afterwards.

The day before his death, having learned from his

physician that it was doubtful whether he had another twenty-four hours to live, he had himself dressed, and, confiding his intentions to no one but Vance, slipped into a carriage and was conveyed to the well-known undertaking establishment of Vulliamy and Cross, in St. James's. Leaning on Vance's arm he tottered into their front shop and sat down amongst the fashionable paraphernalia of coming funerals. At the summons of so distinguished an officer, Mr. Vulliamy came to him, bowing, smirking, and washing his hands in invisible water.

"What may I have the honour of doing for you Sir Harry—no loss I——"

"Sir," said the General, interrupting him, "I am dying."

The gentleman started, and ceased his pantomimic lavation. He had had much experience, but never yet had it happened to him to receive the visit of a future customer, looking and speaking as if he were about to de cease in his shop.

"I trust not, General Jobson," he said affably. "I trust not."

"Silence, sir—do not contradict me. I wish to make the necessary arrangements for my funeral."

Mr. Vulliamy grew pale as he looked at the General's determined face.

"I wish you to understand, sir, that I do not intend my heirs shall be cheated by the undertaker."—A deprecatory gesture from Vulliamy.—"I will tell you briefly how I wish the funeral to be conducted. You will then give me a written estimate to which you must strictly adhere. I have left directions in my will that not one farthing more is to be paid. The coffin, sir, will be of ebony wood, perfectly plain——"

"Excuse me, Sir Harry"—the undertaker took out his notebook. "Your height?"

"Six feet four."

"—A coffin of ebony six feet ten by two feet two. It will be very costly, Sir Harry."

"Permit me," said the General with dignity. "I am the best judge of my own expenditure. It will be of ebony, perfectly simple and plain, do you understand? On a small

silver shield you will have engraved in block letters, the words 'Harry Jobson.'

"—The age, Sir Harry, of course?"

"No age, sir!" thundered the General "Enough if I answer to my name when the roll is called, without impertinent statistics, sir."

"Forgive me, Sir Harry, but it is a very simple inscription for so distinguished an officer—no reference to your numerous honours, Sir Harry?"

"Of what avail to mention my honours, sir, when I am a box of worms ten feet under ground? Vance!"

"Sir Harry."

"D'ye hear! Not a word more on my coffin. If they put a syllable more I engage you to tear the plate off with your own hands. D'ye hear me, sir?"

"Yes, Sir Harry," replied Vance, gulping down a great sob.

"A hearse with two horses—two of your plainest mourning coaches—a Union Jack of silk large enough to enwrap the coffin, and to be buried with it."

The General signalled to Vance. He was weak and leaned heavily on the arm of his faithful valet.

"Your directions shall be strictly attended to, Sir Harry.—Hat-bands, Sir Harry?"

"Three, sir. One for my friend Major Tolboys—one for my nephew—and one for my faithful servant here."

The tears were running down Vance's cheeks.

"—The other mourners will be full-pay officers, sir, in uniform."

"There will be six mutes, Sir Harry—"

"What the ——" the General burst forth, but checking himself before the word was out, he bent his head a moment, and his lips moved. "So near the time," he said in a low voice. "God forgive me." His clear eye rested on the man. "No mutes, sir—no hypocritical jackanapes dancing round my grave, sir. I will be buried like a simple old soldier—my arms and accoutrements will be placed on the coffin, upon the old flag, sir, under which I fought so long."

"No pall, Sir Harry!" cried the man with an accent of horror.

"The flag will be my pall, sir. Six of my old military friends will, I daresay, walk beside my body. I think, sir, there is nothing more."

"Gloves," said the man to himself. He wrote down several figures—and added them up leisurely.

"I think, Sir Harry," he said in a deferential tone, "I might say—on behalf of self and partners, that we would undertake to do it all, in the best and most *recherché* style, for two hundred and fifty pounds."

"Two hundred and fifty pounds, sir!" shouted the General, jumping to his feet, and erect as of old, fixing the man with a look that frightened him down to the toes which were encased in his large shoes. "Two hundred and fifty pounds, sir, for burying a mere bag of bones like me! Ridiculous, sir! Rather than pay such an exorbitant sum as that, sir, I will have no funeral, sir. Vance, your arm. Good morning, sir."

He turned and marched towards the door. Vance, deceived for the moment by this flash of energy, aiding him with a radiant face.

"Stay, Sir Harry—I beg your pardon—I may have made an error in the addition. Pray be seated an instant, and let me go over the estimate again. An ebony coffin, General, is a very expensive affair. Will you allow me to consult my partner for a moment? Perhaps we can arrange it on more favourable terms."

"I can wait for two minutes, sir," said the General, turning round and leaning more heavily on Vance. "The estimate must be reduced considerably, sir—very considerably."

Within a minute the man returned to the shop, accompanied by one of his partners.

"Sir Harry, on consulting my partner who is more experienced than I in these matters, he is of opinion that we can readily undertake to fulfil your wishes for the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds. I had considerably over-estimated the price of ebony, and the workmanship."

"Very well, sir—and quite enough too! Be good enough to write a contract to that effect—have it stamped,

sir, and send it with a receipt to my house in Arlington Street. You shall have a cheque, sir, in full discharge, remember, of all claims against my estate and heirs, sir. Good morning, sir—I am afraid your services will be required in a very few hours.”

The General staggered out of the shop—across the pavement—by an effort mounted unaided into the carriage, and sank back on the cushions.

The next morning Mr. Vulliamy was sent for. Sir Harry Jobson’s premonition had been only too accurate.

CHAPTER XLVII

HOME.

THE breakfast-table of a member of Parliament is often strewn with meats not agreeable or easy to be digested. Your ordinary English breakfast, with its fat bacon, its bronzed liver, its boiled and poached eggs, its cold dish from yesterday's dinner, its flabby toast, and hard-crusted household bread, is enough to turn any stomach not absolutely bovine ; but most members of Parliament are blessed with such peptical apparatus, and cheerfully face a meal that, washed down with bad English coffee, would give a Parisian a week's indigestion. But this for the legislator is the hour for absorbing other *pabulum*. On the white cloth John has arranged the morning journals, the bundle handed in at the door by the sleepless messenger of the House of Commons, and other packets delivered by the postman.

As the pale man comes down late, refreshed a little by a cold plunge, his eye nervously glances at this latter heap. With a trained instinct he measures its dimensions, and by a sort of divination from the aspect of the envelopes of various sizes and shapes, forms a hasty general judgment as to the likelihood of agreeables or disagreeables in the portentous pile :—long blue envelopes, thickly stuffed, from financial and political societies or from lawyers representing parties to bills before Parliament ; others not so clean or so business-like bearing the freight of some poor fellow's mind—here ventured on a wild voyage for one more chance ; a drama—“ I beseech you, dear sir, to read it with care, and if you are of opinion, &c., &c., introduce it to some respectable manager : ” a political satire—“ I know how ready you are to aid, &c. Will you help one, to whom at the moment it is a matter of the greatest consequence, to a publisher—

or perhaps guarantee the necessary funds—it would not be much—for its publication?":—"Miss Cardophonia Grigg presents her *compliments* and *begs* to inclose for the *kind* perusal of Blank Blank, Esquire—*etc.*, *etc.*, *knowing* how *deep* an *interest*, *etc.*, *etc.*:" and so on.

Young ambition—busy mediocrity—industrious feebleness—mature mendicancy—racing against one another to win to the right side of the lucky man. There are many other cunning forms of begging; there are also invitations to political meetings—questions and comments on his written words or public speeches—by constituents, by good-natured friends, by ill-natured critics—most kindly demanding specific and careful replies—others, anonymous or otherwise, foul with abuse, oftenest most gross from irate clergymen, vindicating religion and loyalty; and here most embarrassing of all to a busy man, with eye and brain taxed to the utmost for some fifteen hours a day, long, kind epistles from loving friends in Canada, or India, or Australia—who little think as, in their indolent hours, they pen these gossipy yards of gossamer prose, of the painfulness of the pleasure inflicted upon the busy wretch who is the object of their affectionate garrulity.

Entering his handsomely-furnished breakfast-room, in Charles Street, that quiet, aristocratic pink of a street in Mayfair, at eleven o'clock, Jobson's face, which was grave as he descended the stairs, is traversed with a little flush of pleasure. The clean white cloth is laid with elegance and care, bright flowers decorate the middle of the table, and behind the shining silver of the service, sits young Mrs. Jobson, a fine, and almost handsome, woman, in a white morning dress and with a matronly cap over her abundant brown hair. Beside her, with the heel of one little foot coquettishly trying to crush the toes of the other, stands a little golden-curled girl, and on the hearth-rug, in a state of lively salivation, his jolly face covered with crumbs and flourishing a moist crust which he alternately sticks into his mouth and digs into the hearth-rug aforesaid, the infant hope of the house—the male heir and tyrant rolls prone.

Mrs. Jobson has long since been up breakfasting and stepping about among the Mayfair tradesmen like a shrewd

thrifty daughter of a country clergyman as she was—and she turns her face up for Jobson to kiss. He lifts and embraces the glowing, chattering Etta, he takes a roll on the carpet for a few minutes with Master Arthur, engaged mostly in dodging the heir's ingenious efforts to rub the spongy crust well into his eyes and nose and ears, and then he sits down with a sigh, an habitual unconscious sign of overwork, to his fried fish and the morning journals and the letters. It is a calm and pretty scene, and anyone looking in upon it would have admired the happiness of this fair couple in their fortunate surroundings. Glancing at the pile by his side he says :

“Has Timpany been here?”

“Not yet, love. There is your coffee. Try that sole. Trail has just done it. It is nice and hot—fresh this morning. Are you expecting any work?” (A nod from behind the *Post* down whose columns he is hastily glancing.) “You will kill yourself.”

No answer. His eye is fixed on a letter signed “Index.” He has long been familiar with that name and style. His face breaks out in a smile and he reads aloud :

“How, sir, the Whigs can associate themselves (however remotely) with the party of revolution, I confess more than surpasses my comprehension. They at least have that to lose which has been ever dear to lovers of good government, to all the best political philosophers of all ages—property. Property is the very basis of the social system. Without property the fabric of Society falls and crumbles into its residual atoms.”

“Ha ! Ha !” cried Jobson, interrupting himself, “there is our Skirrow to the life—‘residual atoms’—a superb term to tickle the ear of the groundlings.” He reads on—hum—hum.

“It is this most sacred right which is being endangered by the allies of the Whigs. The Whig party is the party of tadpole—the tail is moved by the head. To-day they propose to abolish the duty on corn, to-morrow they will make an outcry against all taxation—the third day they will propose an equal division of property. The rankest Communism, the wildest theories of government, distinguish this

new school which is beginning to arrogate to itself a position and a force in modern English politics. Only the other night one of the most impudent, if one of the least capable, of this Radical set, with his wonted absence of taste and utter disregard of the interests of his party—signalled his own stupidity, by using the opportunity of the Ballot bill, to ventilate his Communistic theories. It must have been indeed a sad spectacle to the eminently serious and respectable Sir Arthur Jobson, who was sitting in the gallery, to listen to the raw and ignorant harangue of his son, delivered in a manner and a voice that is intolerable to the whole House, and in a style of English that reflects the Yankee influences of his education.”

“—It is too ridiculous,” says Jobson, “but what a mean, diabolical knave this is!”

“And, sir, would you believe that the conceited puppy, after delivering himself of this revolutionary balderdash—in which he advocated universal education, in order to upset the minds of the well-affected lower orders by filling them with novel and dangerous ideas; the ‘freeing’ (*i.e.*—the spoliation) of land; and a more extended suffrage—comes up to the gallery to his father, as I am credibly informed by one who overheard, and, with a smirk of silly satisfaction on his face, says, loud enough to be heard all over the gallery, ‘I have been fighting with beasts at Ephesus.’”

Jobson threw the paper aside, and dug into his egg. His wife glanced at him. There was not a cloud on his face.

“Where do we dine to-night?” he said serenely.

Presently the egg was finished and the honourable member began to con his letters. One, of some length, attracted him, as his wife, whose eyes however always appeared to be set on her children, clearly saw. He read it over twice, and at last threw it down with a gesture of contempt, catching her glance as he did so. A very very slight colour passed over his face—another over hers. She knew very well what was in the letter, though she had broken no seal.

“From the Dean, your papa. He is very much scandalised by the ‘*Questio Quæstionum*’—he evidently thinks I am on the borders of atheism.”

"I don't wonder, my dear," said the lady. "I was certain you would grieve your best friends by that book. It flies in the eyes of all orthodox people, and—it may be all very true—but you know what I think—it is most damaging to your position and prospects."

Jobson balanced his spoon on the edge of his cup and looked into the tea. What his wife had said had passed over him like a breath of wind—except in two particulars, both equally distasteful to him: it showed, what he already knew too familiarly, that she did not sympathise with his views and aims, and, further, that the strongest motive of disagreement was a selfish one. The development of such a situation between a man and wife, both honest and both able, is full of pain and complication.

In truth Mrs. Thaddæus Jobson was a woman of considerable ambition. Her father, the Dean of Coverley, had been an ambitious ecclesiastic, though he had never been able so far to architect his own fortune as to arrive at the episcopal mitre and apron. Yet he had the richest living in England—and a deanship, and a deanery, and a fortune besides. Indeed Dr. Bromley was one of the most lucky men in the Church. But he was still far from satisfied. The Whigs, whom he served what time he was not serving God, had gracefully slipped out of giving him the See of Salisbury. He hated them for it and became converted by hatred to a conscientious Tory.

His daughter, who was quite as able as her father, was penetrated by his spirit. A clever, large, attractive-looking woman—for she was long past girlhood—Jobson, who had met her at a country house, was struck by the many indications of that common-sense which afterwards became so irksome to him, while on her mind his brilliant parts and prospects made a profound impression. Little sentiment entered into this affair. Admiration, regard, ending in a considerable affection, terminated in a marriage. The lady brought into the partnership of life, her imposing presence, her thrifty ways, her capacity for business, her English good-sense, her ambition to be the wife of a great man—and some thirty thousand pounds left her by an uncle. That she loved Jobson there was no doubt—for what he was and

what he could be. But marriage is the tree of knowledge of good and evil—it opens the eyes to the inner character of each to each, and from Mrs. Thaddæus's point of view Jobson was "impracticable." He loved success, yet it was not with him the overpowering motive. She was just beginning to appreciate this fact thoroughly—and her husband was beginning to feel too consciously this appreciation in her, fairly long postponed.

The *Quæstio Quæstionum* was a little work, half-satirical, half-historic, in which the author, assuming the character of an impartial thinker, had put the question: "*Is the Bible worth preserving?*" In a bright, keen, trenchant style, he had reviewed the history of Christianity in relation to the principles expounded in this its authoritative canon. He had glanced at the innumerable disputes to which it had given rise in nations, in societies, in families, in sects—the wars which had been waged with the wildest fury in endeavouring to maintain one or another view of its principles: the force and fraud that had been used in support of its dogmas—the absurdities which had sprung out of it: the immoral defences that had been set up from time to time of its purest and most sacred tenets. He showed how often "where it was most treasured it was least regarded, and where it was least acknowledged as an authority many of its best principles were most thoroughly carried into practice." And he ended by ironically coming to the conclusion that "a book which had been the cause of so many mishaps, quarrels, divisions, wars, treasons, inhumanities, could scarcely be worth preserving; nay, on the contrary, as it had been demonstrated that all these evils were natural and inseparable incidents of the study and propagation of the text of this book, it was a nuisance, which ought by all means and as speedily as possible to be abolished."

The gravity and minuteness with which Jobson had conducted his inquiry gave to his satire air of verisimilitude; so great, indeed, that its irony escaped most of those whose refinement of culture was not of the most perfect. To the majority of commonplace enthusiasts, the book seemed to be little other than a wicked and injurious libel on Christianity; nay, it had shocked the worthy Dean, the author's

father-in-law, and still more that important lady his mother-in-law. His father had read it with admiration of the acuteness and range of its criticism, but he shook his head as he read and asked himself—the same old question—

“Is it quite discreet of Taddy to publish such a book as this? It will raise up a host of enemies.”

Only Roger, in a long, enthusiastic letter had said :

“I am old now, my light is paling, my polemic energies are waning, but your book has done me good. The simpler and deeper and more earnest my belief in God—the greater repugnance do I feel at what I see going on around me in the world of what is called ‘religion.’

To true religion you have done a great service. But I fear the men who ought to read your book will never read it ; and those who admire it most will be the enemies of Christianity.”

While Jobson was looking into his tea-cup, silent, he was conscious that Mrs. Jobson was regarding him. He did not speak because he felt that anything he said would lead to discussion, and instinct told him that between him and his wife there was a profound and immovable difference. She was honest but she was not ingenious or acute enough to follow out the intricacies of his thoughts. She was not sympathetic and therefore she would fail to comprehend the sincerity of his purpose. And loving her, cherishing her, he shrank from a misunderstanding. Love finds little footing in the arena of discussion. A man and his wife must either believe and work together, or the weakest must be satisfied to love, and leave the strongest to think unchallenged.

“You say nothing, Taddy—it is so unkind of you. Do you not care about my opinion? You published the book against my judgment, and you see I was right.”

Every one of those simple words jarred on his nerves. But he looked up with his quiet, clear blue eyes.

“Sylvia, if in spite of your judgment I published it, cannot you see that I must have felt it to be a very crying duty to do so? *Do I care for your opinion?* My dear Sylvia, ought I to be asked such a question? *Ca va sans dire*—or ought to. If I did *not*? Well—what a fearful question

you would be raising. I do not think you *were* right ; from my point of view I was right. I am willing to wait till after my death, if necessary, for my vindication—you want immediate success."

"Exactly, I was right. You do not care for my opinion—if you did, you would adopt it."

"My dear wife, surely you are logical enough to see that I might honour and respect your opinion, and yet consider it my duty not to act upon it."

"Of course, that is what I say. You prefer your own opinion, and therefore you don't care for mine."

"Excuse me," said Jobson, getting irritated. His nerves were not in the best order after his late sitting. "What do you mean by 'don't care for'? I have just said I do respect your opinion."

"You cannot. You despise it. You *always* act in spite of it. I advised you not to lend money to that Mr. Bulkely—and where is that five thousand pounds now? I have urged you again and again not to be so extreme in your speeches. You have made yourself notorious ; every moderate man regards you as a firebrand—but you go on just the same. Witness your speech on the ballot. Even your father spoke of it as too extreme. It is clear enough you don't care for my opinion ; you act in utter disregard of it."

"But my dear," said Jobson, "you see everything turns, as I say again, on what you mean by 'don't care for.' I do respect your opinion, and I give it naturally even more than its due weight—but then sometimes there are higher considerations——"

"'More than its due weight!' Of course, I knew my opinion was worth very little in your eyes or you would not so utterly reject it. 'Higher considerations'! What higher consideration *can* there be than the happiness of your family—the future of your children?"

"Well!" cried Jobson, his irritation showing itself in his darkening eyes and slightly raised voice, "such little considerations as duty—and right—and conscience—and truth. You do not see these things as I do. I have a large ideal towards which I am aiming. You either cannot or will not see it with my eyes. Your ideal is perhaps a lower one. You

care about my success in winning men's praises—fame—office—position. I care about these things too if they come in the course of doing one's duty ; but I care for something more, the approval of my own conscience."

Here Sylvia Jobson was cornered with no escape by any logical process, but women have ever another arrow in their quiver.

"Then you mean that *I* have no conscience, Taddy!" she cried out with moist and angry eyes. "No conscience—"

"Dear! dear!" said Jobson. "Why will you be so perverse and illogical? What end can there be to controversy with a woman?" he said to himself with a profoundly comic seriousness as he got up and paced the room. "When they are beaten at all points they will raise a new issue out of a word or a perversion of it—"

At this stage Master Harry Jobson set up an opportune howl, and was snatched by his mamma, who disappeared with him, while Jobson thoughtfully collected his papers and went into his library.

This was the first time that the profound difference between Jobson and his wife had been quite so sharply defined. Each of them had a fine nature—each of them shrank from harbouring a thought uncongenial to the other. An overpowering affection can keep down and conceal these differences, like gunpowder walled up in a cellar, but an overpowering affection between strong souls is rare except in cases of the deepest religious sympathies. We have said there was little sentiment in the liking of these two people, and without sentiment there is no real sympathy. Jobson, appalled at the prospect of a divided life now opened before him, strove to beat back the rising thoughts and to keep his mind chivalrously true to the wife he had promised to honour and esteem. In a woman, such chivalry is rare—if not impossible—while the superhuman affection is frequent and superb ; and Mrs. Jobson, who had not the superhuman affection, pondered through the day, with a darkened face, the morning's talk.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

MISS JOBSON IS OFFENDED.

“SYLVIA!” cried Bertha Jobson, entering with her quick quiet step—“not dressed, and looking so pale! Are you ill?”

“I have a headache, dear, and you must excuse me to-day. I need not ask you how *you* are—you look charming.”

Miss Bertha Jobson’s cheek took on a little more colour at this compliment, and her eye beamed benignly as she leaned down over Mrs. Jobson, whose tall figure was at the moment placed at a disadvantage in a low easy chair, and kissed her forehead. Above Bertha’s fine complexion and oval brow, the hair, smoothed down so carefully on both sides, was now interwoven with silver lines, and time had begun to touch the sweet features here and there with gentle significant marks.

“Your head is quite hot,” she said, putting a neat glove on her niece’s forehead. “I will stay with you and have some tea.”

She had already untied her bonnet-strings, and with a light step she crossed the room and rang to tell the servant to send away her phaeton. She was living the simplest, prettiest life in Arlington Street, with her little establishment of two women-servants; an open and close carriage with a single horse and a smart coachman occupying the stables.

The ladies began to talk.

“How is Taddy? He is doing too much and is too terribly in earnest. He looks pale and quite worn down. Do you know, dear, I almost wonder sometimes whether he has any secret cause of worry.”

There was a little startled look from Mrs. Thaddæus to her husband’s aunt, but there was no malice in the gentle eyes that met Sylvia’s gaze.

"He keeps on placing himself in impossible positions," said Mrs. Jobson. "I am constantly urging him to have some more consideration for his own interests and those of his family. How can a man be happy who is always exciting himself on a hundred questions and always taking the wrong side?"

Bertha drew up her figure straight in the chair, in which she had begun to lounge for an agreeable interview, and clasped her hands tightly on her lap. Her eyes opened wonderingly and showed signs of lively feeling.

"Sylvia!" she exclaimed in a deep, agitated tone that penetrated the complainer's breast. "What does this mean? Taddy Jobson is the noblest—most generous fellow that ever lived, and while he is fighting for truth and reformation in the bravest, manliest way, does he really get no sympathy from his wife?"

Bertha Jobson's tone had unconsciously become harder as she went on. Result: Mrs. Jobson, feeling herself to be thoroughly wrong, resented the reproach conveyed by Bertha's words.

"I should have thought, Cousin Bertha," she said, haughtily, "that it was unnecessary for me to say that I sympathised with everything that was good and noble, and that my love for my husband required no vindication—even to his relations: but I am not such a fool as to be blinded—like some people—to a man's faults, especially when they entail such serious consequences as an absolute loss of social position, and of character for common-sense, and even of professional prospects. Taddy is not a millionaire peer who can afford to air his radical whims as he pleases. We are, as you know, far from rich, and a man of his great abilities ought by this time to have attained a much higher position in parliament than he has done. Timpany was here only this morning with an intimation that Crudens, the solicitors, have withdrawn from Taddy the papers in *Surtees versus the Goldsmiths' Company*—an immense affair—and Timpany, who is a very clever young man, told me himself that Crudens' head-clerk attributed the change to that book—the *Quæstio Quæstionum*. The Crudens are solicitors to half the rich

dissenters and evangelicals in London ; of course they can't patronise a junior suspected of atheism !”

Bertha looked, as she felt, painfully distressed. Her face had grown pale, and as the lady had gone on, anger had begun to grow, as could be seen by the knitting of the gentle brow and the darker play of her gentle eyes. She restrained herself.

“Have you said anything to Taddy about this ?” she said calmly. In her own mind she was asking herself whether a wife ought to be listening to such gossip from her husband's servants.

“Of course I have ! I have spoken to him seriously—for things, you know, are getting really beyond a joke. My father is deeply grieved by that wretched book—and Taddy is getting *such* letters from his Church friends he will scarcely be able to go to Saint Tryphosa's again,—and the papers are more full of abuse of him than ever—and—ah ! ah ! ah !—” said big Mrs. Jobson, beginning to cry—“he does not care a bit about what I say, and I am so troubled and worried I don't know what to do with myself.”

Bertha clasped her hands more tightly than ever, but did not move from her chair, or say one cheering word. Her warm heart had suddenly received a stiffening chill. This was Taddy's wife !

* * * *

“Poor Taddy !”

* * * *

It is an infallible rule of happiness between man and wife, that their love and their differences must be kept absolutely secret within the cloister of home. They are not to be partitioned with the servants or—the dearest friend. No others can share the privacy of the intercommunion of two souls that are *one*. Bertha Jobson almost regarded her nephew as perfect, and loved his wife, chiefly because *he* had selected her from all women to be his wife, and secondarily because of Sylvia's own strong and energetic character. Bertha, whose strength was gentler but profounder, admired the energy and daring of Mrs. Jobson. But the young wife, by letting out to Bertha the secret of the difference between her and her husband, had not made

more easy the healing of the rupture. For the difference occurred in that high region of feeling and principle where it is impossible that any third soul, however acute and sympathetic, can come in with any of the elements of reconciliation.

Bertha was shocked. She knew how much he had to bear from without : but, not to be supported at home, to sleep on a bosom that was not wholly kind to him—it was no wonder if he looked weary and broken down ! Her own faith in him, her own admiration of him, her own loyalty to him, never wavered—but here was his wife not only not defending him, which in itself is disloyalty in a wife, but accusing him to another, no matter how near and dear—that was to Bertha's mind sheer treason. And in such a mind as hers things formulate themselves very clearly and definitely. She rose and put on her bonnet again.

“Taddy is your husband, Sylvia,” she said quietly. “I hope you never speak of him, as you have to me, to anyone else.”

And she went out with a staid, lofty manner without kissing her nephew's wife.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A MODEL SUNDAY.

MR. TIMPANY still reigned as clerk of the chambers for the two barristers in Pump Court. He had hardly increased in size, although years had added considerably to his importance. A red undergrowth, which he termed "whiskers," covered his cheeks, erstwhile so smooth, while his chin and upper lip, though sedulously shaven, had in certain lights a hue of brazen lacquer. He wore high collars and a satin stock; a large silver watch-chain graced his double waistcoat—double even in the middle of summer. His trousers fitted closely to his legs and were held in shape by straps. He was indeed considered by his fellow-clerks and other human beings (mostly female) an "elegant" young man. Many however as were the temptations to which this ingenuous youth was exposed as the consequence of his charms, he had fixed his affections on Miss Angelina Bopps, now a young woman of considerable attractions in the eyes of connoisseurs in her own rank of life, where chubbiness is a beauty, and rich fulness of form a grace. Timpany's sharp and practical mind had been greatly struck by Mr. Bopps's frequent reference to the "three per cent. con-sols, sir," from which he had derived the impression that Miss Bopps was not only a beauty but a booty. Among the other rivals the most dangerous to Timpany's hopes, was a young and very raw Methodist minister, from a neighbouring chapel, who, of a Sunday, took tea with the Bopps family in the little parlour behind the shop, and whose lean long neck, if Timpany were to be believed, was from day to day in considerable danger of being wrung. Mr. Bopps looked with favour on young Timpany. His sharpness and knowledge of the world had recommended him to the old shoemaker—while Mrs. Bopps, who suffered from a recent awakening of her

conscience on the subject of some of the lodgers whom she had formerly harboured, was rather inclined to the evangelist. We are all of us as ready as Abraham to sacrifice our children for our sins. The Rev. Theodore Statics was a cadaverous youth, with a deep voice, which, emerging unexpectedly from his thin, parchment frame, excited a mingled sensation of awe and amusement in any who heard it for the first time. As for Angelina, her preference was not absolutely fixed, standing indeed at that part of the cardinal barometer marked "variable," her feelings changing as the world or the spirit gained the ascendancy in her heart.

The Sunday after that critical event in Mr. Jobson's chambers—the withdrawal of the brief in the Surtees case—Mr. Timpany, who had, in honour of the day and Angelina, donned a pair of nankeen inexpressibles, and carried in his hand a short cane with round top of some size and weight, entered by Mr. Bopps's side door, just as Angelina, tightly enclosed in a silk frock which showed off her round proportions to advantage, happened by the most singular accident in the world (she had been looking out of the second floor window) to arrive at the bottom of the stairs.

Mr. Timpany, even in love, retained his self-possession, while she blushed and giggled in an agony of trepidation. Before, however, she could say anything, the clerk advanced and, encircling her waist with his arm, imprinted a kiss upon her cherry lips. While she was blushing and laughing and hustling to get free from her visitor's ardent compliments, the front door opened and the tall thin form of the Reverend Theodore Statics stood between the posts.

Angelina, with a little shriek, tore herself away from Timpany and darted upstairs. A sickly smile flitted over the face of the Reverend Theodore, while Mr. Timpany, turning round, glanced angrily at the minister.

"I wonder people don't *knock* before they enter people's houses," said the clerk with dignity.

"Oh!" replied Mr. Statics with provoking coolness, "I am quite at home here, Mr. Timpany. I hope Angelina was not ill?"

"You are referring, sir, to Miss Bopps, I suppose? She is not ill, but she slipped on the stairs, and I was just in

time to save her from falling. I am afraid she sprained her foot," replied Timpany.

"I should say," said Mr. Statics gravely, "from the manner in which she ascended the stairs her feet were as hind's feet."

"Ascended? Jacob's ladder? eh?" cried Timpany. "Angels—leastwise Angelinas—ascending and descending. He! He!"

"Let us go into the parlour," said Mr. Statics, offended at Timpany's profane invasion of that field of Scriptural humour which those of the cloth like to keep to themselves.

In the family sanctum, sat Mr. and Mrs. Bopps, engaged in the mixture of afternoon Sabbatic sleepiness and Scripturality usual to pious people who have dined early. Mr. Bopps, on account of the hot weather, was in his shirtsleeves. He and his wife each bore on their knees a large quarto volume of the Commentaries of Dr. Adam Clarke, who contended that the devil was a monkey, and, if I remember rightly, had some heterodox notions about the souls of animals which ought to commend him to the anti-vivisectionists. The celerity with which the shoemaker slapped up the two sides of his volume and clapped it on the chest of drawers behind him, where the companion volumes were ranged in a row, showed that he, at all events, was not sorry to be interrupted in his dozing study of "exegesis."

"Servant, Mr. Statics—fine sermon this morning, sir—they degrees goin' backwards hon 'Ezekiah's dial 'as allays been a puzzle to me—meanin' the shiftin' hov the sun right round: but hi see you follow Hadam Clarke, sir—first-rate common-tator. 'Ow do, Mister Timpany? Why, them nankeens and straps looks very well hover my boots. You're *halways* helegantly dressed, Mister Timpany, has Hangelina says, 'ere she his. Tea, *my* dear, has quick has possible—some buttered toast—you know Mister Timpany likes buttered toast."

"So does Mr. Statics," said Mrs. Bopps.

Angelina shyly greeted Mr. Statics, who looked at her very solemnly, and then she set to work to lay the tea-things.

Mrs. Bopps, sitting in her armchair with her chubby

hands crossed over the Commentary, went on with the conversation. She was anxious to direct its current into Sunday topics.

"You never said nothink hin your sermon Mr. Statics habout that plaister of figs they clapped hupon 'Ezekiah's stummick—hi suppose hit must ha been——"

"Oh! ma!" cried Miss Bopps. "Hit was a boil!"

"It was an ulcer or some other sore of that kind," said Mr. Statics gravely. "Its exact position is not stated. It is not impossible it may have been——"

"Well, no matter w'ere it was," interrupted Mrs. Bopps. "Who hever heard hof puttin' a poultice o' them nassy, brown, sugary figs hover a sore place—hi never did! Henough to make hit mortchify, let halone the nastiness."

"You must remember, Mrs. Bopps," interposed the minister, "the figs were fresh green figs, not like those you buy here in shops."

"Jest has good has linseed for a poultice," remarked Mr. Bopps.

"There now!" cried Mrs. Bopps; "that's the vally hovyer eggseecheeses, as ye call it. Who'd hever a thought them figs was green? Well hanyway 'twas my-raclous, Mr. Statics, I suppose?"

"It's a canon of interpretation, ma'am," says Statics, "that you are never to suppose a miracle where you can account for an event in a natural way—*etc.*" And Mr. Statics went on showing that the miracle was performed to satisfy Hezekiah's doubts, but the healing was in the ordinary course of nature. Mrs Bopps, as the tea was ready, brought the conversation to an end with the sententious remark:

"Well, *hif* I was to 'ave hany miracle performed hover me hi'd prefer 'avin cure to conviction"—a worldly idea Mr. Statics would have liked to combat smartly had not the smell of buttered toast ascended to his nostrils and aroused the flesh and subdued the spirit.

While the young minister and the old couple were discussing theology, Angelina was able to exchange some asides with Mr. Timpany.

"You guess who hi seed!" remarked Angelina as she passed with a tea-cloth.

"Give it up," replied Timpany, as she went back to the pantry cupboard for the plates.

"Missis Skirrow" (carrying the plates past).

Timpany pondered as Angelina polished each plate before laying it on the table. She looked at him. Thereupon he winked. Mr. Statics, detecting this atrocity, grew red as fire, even while he spoke with unction of Hezekiah's meekness.

"Hif you do that hagain," whispered Miss Bopps, "hi'll go hand sit by Mister Statics."

"Beg pardon," said Timpany. "Where was Mrs. Skirrow?"

"In 'igh 'olborn." (Tea-tray.)

"Did she say anything?"

"Yes—told me hif hi seed you to say 'ow has 'er 'usband was made managin' clerk in a lawyer's hoffice."

"What name?"

"Crumple, Block, hand Somethink."

"Newsome. My eye!"

"Hangelina! W'y w're's the tea—wot har you gossipin' habout? Some folks don't care to 'ear habout religion," cried Mrs. Bopps a little sharply and looking at Timpany, who smiled good-naturedly.

Miss Bopps ran away to the kitchen, leaving Timpany in a profound brown study. Crumple, Block and Newsome were Jobson's best clients, and Tom Skirrow, who had been clerk in another house which never sent a brief to Timpany's master, was now in a position at least to divert a good deal of business from four Pump Court.

Mr. Timpany's little round face looked as long as a dish when he drew up to the table between Mr. Bopps and Angelina, who poured out the tea. Skirrow, he knew, had tried to be the bane of Jobson's life for some years. While he was an articulated clerk he had, notoriously in the clerical circles of the profession, been a slashing writer in the *Post*, where attacks on Jobson were many and malignant. But there were other papers of a lower order, into which Jobson never looked, if he even knew of their existence; journals

that used to be produced at that time in dens off an evil-famed street behind Lyon's Inn, and where the most atrocious scandals were printed against public or well-known characters. Timpany, who had preserved the very honourable ideas of duty inculcated by his former chief, the clerk of the Attorney-General, had kept his own counsel about the matter which led to his first acquaintance with the Bopps family. Therefore, when he read one day in the *Smutcher*—the old "Society" papers had appropriate names—the following paragraph, he was much disturbed :

"It is said that a certain notorious Radical barrister and "M.P. is not altogether the saint he affects to be at Sunday "school and church meetings. It would be interesting to "know the names of the honourable gentleman's clients, "and to have a list of all the persons of either sex, who "have called at his chambers and subsequently at his "bankers. 'Thereby hangs a tale.' Some day we may "return to this subject. It is our duty to expose canting "hypocrisy wherever we find it."

No doubt this paper had been sent by an obliging friend or friends to Jobson's house, but it had passed into his wastepaper-basket unread, so soon as he had seen its title. But this sort of literature is fashionable with lawyers' and all other clerks, and Mr. Timpany, who knew the circumstances connected with the *sci-uisant* Mrs. Hildyard, was able at once to detect the sinister meaning of the obscure passage and the hand which had penned it. Therefore, apart from any anxiety he might have been generous enough to feel for his employer, he was too honest to his own interests not to be alarmed by the information Mrs. Skirrow had sent him. Neither he nor Jobson had seen or heard anything of her for years, and the fact that she had taken the trouble to give a warning was in itself an unfavourable omen.

Tea was ready, and some smoking crumpets lay on the table with the buttered toast, while the room steamed with hot liquid and the summer moistness of too many occupants. Mrs. Bopps earnestly strove to keep the talk in a Sunday channel. Her upstairs lodgers now were reputable people, but there was a long memory of ungodly lettings to be atoned for, by making Sunday miserable—and one would

think it could scarcely be made more miserable than by trying to hammer out Scriptural conundrums with a half-educated evangelist. Mr. Bopps, on the other hand, while he deemed it only right and respectable to patronise the chapel and Adam Clarke, and generally to abstain from un-Sundaylike proceedings, had a healthy relish for a little gossip, and Mr. Timpany was the sharpest and most worldly man of his acquaintance. Between Mr. Bopps's worldliness and the would-be piety of his wife, the conversation became a curious mixture, especially as it was carried on at a table about four feet six inches in diameter, and "asides" were scarcely possible. Mr. Statics suffered greatly: for the old woman sedulously kept him up to duty, when he would fain have listened to Mr. Timpany's account of the great world from which a Methodist minister was then—if not now—debarred, or have devoted himself a little to the charming Angelina.

"Why, Mr. Timpany," said the shoemaker, with his mouth full, "you haint got no toast!—*Hangelina!*—Take some shrimps, sir. Well—'ows the law a gettin' hon now? Briefs has plenty has mulberries?"

Timpany shook his head.

"Wish they were, Mr. Bopps. And it isn't because there aren't any going."

"'Ow's that, Mr. Timpany? Your Mr. Jobson's considered a rare clever man, haint 'ee?"

"He's *the* very cleverest man at the bar, Mr. Bopps, all the barristers' clerks allow—but——"

"Now, there's that profit Hezekiel, Mr. Statics, with them w'eels within w'eels and the walley hof dried bones. The more hi reads habout 'im the less of 'im can hi make hout," said Mrs. Bopps in a loud voice to crush down the untimely conversation of her husband and visitor.

"They spoke deep spiritual things in metaphors, ma'am—all the prophets spoke in metaphors," replied Mr. Statics arranging his collar and looking very learned.

"Now see *that* Hangelina!—You just take that hin—Wot's the difference, Mr. Statics, between a pinafore hand a mirakle?"

"Metaphor, I said, ma'am—a kind of illustration, you know—a parabolic——"

Here Angelina and Mr. Timpany burst out laughing and Statics turned very red.

"I am afraid," he said, "that some of our friends are not disposed for converse that tends to edification."

"Reg'lar 'eathens, Mr. Statics—hand hunless they gets the heyees of their 'arts hopened hand their souls henlightened, down to the bottomless pit they'll go for hever and hever hamen. Hi'm hashamed hof you, Miss Bopps—and *you*, Mr. Bopps, sittin' there hand a hencouragink hof them, hon the Blessed Sabbath Day too—hand your hairs grown grey hand your days numbered like the sands on the sea shore. Shame hon you, Mr. Bopps, so behavin' with two young creeturs goin' down to perdition before your heyees."

"Tut ! tut ! mother," cried Bopps good-naturedly, thrusting a crummet into his mouth with his fat fingers, from which he afterwards carefully sucked the melted butter, "we can't halways be talkin' with Mr. Statics habout mettyfors hand heggsancheeses. Hi'm honly haskin' the young man 'ow 'ees a gettin' hon. Well, Mr. Timpany, 'bout the lawyer—w'at's the matter ?"

"The fact is," replied Timpany, "they say he's too forward and outspoken for a sucking barrister, leastways in politics—and then again he goes and tries to do too much. You see, he's a great radical—he's Member of the House of Commons, and writes books—precious clever bōoks they are, I can tell you," added Timpany with an air of appreciation, "but that don't help in our business, you know, where what a man wants to know is his cases."

"So do a shoemaker for that matter," interrupted the old lady, looking sharply at her spouse, "or helse 'ee's has like has plums to bring hout number two-and-a half girl's slippers, for men's helevens."

"I don't mean boxes, ma'am," said Timpany smiling and nudging the soft side of Angelina, "I mean law cases—'actions at law,' ma'am, they're called : all the old ones are reported in books—thousands of them—and every lawyer has to carry the whole of them in his head."

"Law's a massy !" cried Mrs. Bopps.

"There's a case called '*The Six Carpenters' Case*,' for instance."

"That 'ill be ha good big box hanyway," remarked Mrs. Bopps.

"No ma'am—it's a 'leading case' in the law. Then there's statutes, and 'Coke upon Littleton,' and 'Bracton' and 'Blackstone' and a whole lot of other books, and every lawyer has to know them off by heart."

"Hem—as divines with the Bible and the Commentaries," suggested Mr. Statics.

"If they didn't remember more than most preachers do," retorted Mr. Timpany, "there couldn't be much law a going in the courts."

"Now, young men—no fightin' between law hand gospel," exclaimed Bopps. "The long hand the short hof it his that Mister Jobson don't 'stick to his last,' has we shoe-makers say."

"That's it, sir. Leastways that's my opinion. He'd a been a rich man now if he could hev kept his hands off church and politics. Then you know they have stories out about him."

"Stories?" Mrs. Bopps pricked up her ears.

"Yes—he ain't been quite cautious, you know."

Mr. Statics and Mrs. Bopps and Mr. Bopps all looked earnestly at Mr. Timpany.

"Wot—you don't mean no scandal, Mr. Timpany?" said Mrs. Bopps.

Timpany nodded his head.

"Hangy—take haway them tea-things," she said sharply.

Angelina very slowly put the things on the tea-tray and very slowly withdrew, while the three curious auditors were burning with impatience to hear Mr. Timpany's secret.

"Well—ho my!—Hi'd never a thought hit," said Mrs. Bopps.

"Thought what, my dear—'ee hain't said nothink," said Mr. Bopps.

"Ho—ain't 'ee though. Ha nod's has good has a wink to a blind horse. Wot *his* hit, Mr. Timpany—Hangy's hout o' 'earing?"

"O nothing," said Mr. Timpany with a provoking smile. "It's only a story. I know there's not a word of truth in it, and I'm not going to let out scandals about a good master."

He rose. Mr. Bopps burst out laughing. Mrs. Bopps looked thunder at them and turned and lavished her attentions on Mr. Statics, who saw with anguish Angelina follow Mr. Timpany to the front door when he took leave.

"Look here, Angy," said the clerk, emphasising the request in a peculiar way. "You try and find out where that Mrs. Skirrow is living, and if she wants at any time to send a message to me, ask her to let you know. That blessed husband of hers is going to play the devil with us in Pump Court."

"O fie! Mister Timpany!"

"There! Ta! ta!"

CHAPTER L.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF CANDOUR.

IN Bertha's mind the revelation which had suddenly been made to her of the working of Sylvia's feelings towards her husband, rankled deeply and sorely. Her own simplicity, tenderness, and chivalry of devotion were so natural and pure, that it was hardly possible for her to conceive of any excuse for thinking or speaking of one's husband as Sylvia had done, or to suppose that there could be a profound, or even a conventional love beneath an opinion which seemed to contain in it as much of contempt and of dissatisfaction. She was right in thinking that a temporary outbreak of passion, in some disagreement with a loved one, was far less important than this cold, severe criticism of his principles or action.

But when she came to ask herself what step she should take in view of her discovery, she was puzzled. She shrank from opening the subject to Taddy. His reserve on matters of personal and family feeling was refined almost to morbidity, and beside the vexation it would cause him of knowing that his aunt understood the delicacy of the relations between him and his wife, there would be the far more wounding effect likely to be produced on his mind on learning that she had confided the sacred secret to another. Bertha felt that she could not consult anyone else as to the course to be pursued in the circumstances. From that she shrank. It was a secret she ought not to have known, how much less then ought she to communicate it to an outsider? Lady Pilkington and Winnistoun both occurred to her. She could not have spoken even to Sir Arthur Jobson as intimately as to either of them. Her relations to Winnistoun since the day when she had refused him her hand, had been of the purest and most candid friendship. They had

never—either of them—alluded to the critical interview again. And their intimacy was most refined and sympathetic. She would not have hesitated to consult him on anything affecting her own happiness in feeling or situation. And on his part, he spoke to her as if she were a sister, and sometimes brought to her his most difficult and trying experiences. No brother and sister could have had an intercourse more sincere and simple. It was the sublimation of friendship. Yet here was a matter on which she felt that she could not confer with him. She was reduced to the wretchedness of bearing the cankering knowledge in her own heart, and watching the development of a situation she was powerless to change.

Still there was one thing she might do, though she doubted long before she could bring herself to try it. She might at least warn her who had first mooted the subject. The struggle over this idea lasted in Bertha's mind for two days ; and when at length, weary and excited, she had resolved to act upon it, she had already, by keeping away from Charles Street, aroused Jobson's wonder and Mrs. Jobson's discontent.

Jobson asked Sir Arthur where his aunt was.

Sir Arthur naturally replied that he saw her every day at breakfast, though he was too deeply occupied to know much else of her movements. The young man went over to call in Arlington Street.

"Why, Aunty, where have you been? Two days since I kissed you! There! There!"

"I have been very busy, and not very well."

The paleness of her cheek confirmed this latter statement.

"—Hot weather, I think."

She was trying to avoid his eye, which looked at her very earnestly. There was something sad in his face which struck to her heart—a proud melancholy in the eyes, with weariness too about his look.

"Perhaps," she said. "But, Taddy dear, you are looking tired. Are you not doing too much?"

"Yes," replied Jobson gloomily. "But each man must work his work, endure his lot, and bide the event."

He walked about the room.

She had sat down and was looking at him. Was he going to bring it all out, to open his heart to her? Should she help him? She said :

“Is anything worrying you?”

“No—well—yes—everybody is worried, you know,” said Jobson, who knew not how to own anything without confessing all, and was resolute not to confess. “Do you know I believe I am losing my business?”

“Nonsense!”

“Unfortunately it is not nonsense, it is fact. Poor Timpany is in despair. My best case was taken over to Pilstone—Mister Skirrow made managing clerk to my best clients, and carrying off their business elsewhere. A dead disinclination on the part of the attorneys to employ a political, a radical—an atheistic lawyer.” His tone was bitter and sarcastic.

“Well, you have plenty to live on, dear boy—happily that is nothing.”

“Yes it is. It is *failure*—at something I had set my heart on, and, whatever the world may think of it, it diminishes my self-respect.”

“Why, you are wrong there, Taddy, on your own showing,” she said brightly. “If this comes from the cause you name, it is to your honour—you are suffering from doing your duty.”

Was it some uneasy feeling in his mind with regard to this very point that made the shades in Jobson’s face deeper than ever? It is probable that with the vast majority of strong, impulsive men with keen intellects, there is very often an extreme difficulty in determining whether they have acted rightly. They see how much there is to be said on the other side, and it troubles them. It is only the great enthusiasts and other lunatics who are always sure they are right—the reasoning and reasonable man can only in regard to a certain class of questions, and on occasions, satisfy himself that he has hit the just mean. Spite of himself, Jobson could not fail to see that in doing his duty he was losing his influence. Three years before he had been one of the most popular men in England : equally

popular among worldlings and religious people. To-day he was an object of suspicion and contempt to both. Had he made a mistake and thrown away a great opportunity? To such a man such a question could not fail to come up, and very often to struggle hard within him for a just answer. In every case he firmly shut down the question and said, "I have done what is right and must bear the consequences." But this brings a man to something very near fatalism. His aunt had just expressed this principle, and coming to him at this particular time it caused him less solace than embarrassment. He turned to her :

"Is a man justified in sacrificing his position and influence to utter great and true things? Resolve me that, mine aunt !"

"Yes," she replied at once. The sentiment was attractive and naturally commended itself to a noble nature.

"Is the rule *invariable*, Aunt Bertha?"

Bertha Jobson thus challenged stopped and began to think :

"Well, you know, Taddy, there are many great and true things that it is not always necessary or convenient to say——"

"For instance, that Lord Mewbourne is a crafty, unprincipled political huckster—or Mr. Disraeli a conceited adventurer—both great and true facts, but not at the moment expedient to be declared."

"Now you are laughing at me, Taddy, and I have often told you, sir, that is most disrespectful to your aunt. Do you not think that perhaps there may be other really great and even true *principles* which it is not always wise to affirm—that perhaps there are times and opportunities for enunciating such principles—that it requires judgment to be exercised in seizing upon those opportunities—and that the cause of truth may even be injured from indiscreet and untimely advocacy of it."

"Spoken like a book, mine Aunt," cried Jobson, "or rather like a Jesuit ! And just the very thing that is often occurring to me—as I believe it occurs to most cowards of men who want to shirk their duty. Yes. I own all that—but do you wish to apply the *argumentum ad hominem*—ad

homunculum—Taddy Jobson? Have I been wanting in tact and consideration, in writing as I have done? Remember these are no light questions. I find the whole Christian world almost—with the exception of a few gentle, simple-hearted pious people, cankered by hypocrisy and cant. I say so. Any time for saying so would be an uncomfortable time for the persons concerned. Why shouldn't I say it?"

"Why should you say it?"

"Because I feel it and my soul revolts at it, and my mind is stirred and must relieve itself."

"Well, Taddy dear, that is the answer. That means you felt called upon to speak out at any risk: and if you had that call—you have only done your duty—and if you have done your duty, you ought to be satisfied."

"—And if you ought to be satisfied, shut up! A good *sorites*, my most logical Aunt. No, the truth is, the vindication of what I have done or said is not to be found strictly in its inherent rightness, but also in the manner in which I have done. If my protest and criticism are feeble I have done more harm than good, and furthermore have injured my own interests deeply and permanently. If on the contrary I have done it effectively—and from the row that I have created all over the world I must at least have pricked deeply—then I am justified both by principle and by expediency. The question has, however, I admit, been fairly put to me by a certain person who shall be nameless—whether I am not a fool for my pains."

Jobson all this time was walking about the room.

"Who put you that question?" innocently inquired most womanlike Miss Jobson, trying to surprise her nephew into a confession—for his own good.

Jobson stopped and fidgeted. He pretended to be intently examining a picture of which he knew every line by heart.

"Oh! a friend—hum—yes—a very dear friend somewhat exercised about my career, and I have been turning it over in my mind."

"Well, Taddy," said Miss Jobson with spirit, "keep up your courage—and do what you think is right. What is that bad Latin you said Lord Mansfield once made up—

Fiat something? The Age has not caught up to you yet——”

“Ah! Exit, some day, Jobson through the curtain into space, the Age still pursuing. My dear Aunt,”— softly this, with a tear in his voice—“I wish *you* were always near me when I have the fidgets.” And kissing her, he went off.

Miss Jobson thereupon sent and asked Winnistoun why he had been so long without calling. He came the next day.

“Have you seen much of Taddy lately?” she asked him casually.

“No. He must be preternaturally busy. I don’t see how the fellow gets through his work. It is never slipshod. Books, speeches, briefs all well done, and such a lot.”

“He works easily.”

“And too much.”

“Do you mean anything special by that?”

“Well, I hear a great deal from both friends and foes. I am told that in the House he is greatly admired but greatly disliked. Not a success. Any man who asserts himself strongly—or in other words lets himself out—and is a man of real power, will, to begin, win more admiration than affection—that is to be expected. Ours is an old society and cannot stand young leaders. Jobson never compromises, never yields an inch, falls foul of his old friends the Whigs (there I think he makes a mistake, though we know he has good reason), is scornful of opposite opinions, tenacious of his own, perhaps is not so conciliatory in private life as he ought to be. But his true great power ought to carry him triumphantly through all these difficulties. Other men of inferior powers have succeeded: give him a fair field, he will succeed. His great difficulty is his great activity. I wish he were less catholic in his iconoclasm. Thus when a friend stands by and applauds him for knocking down some great abuse, he suddenly finds Jobson turn round and bowl him over himself. For instance he was a great man with the clergy—well, you know how his clerical friends take that last book of his!”

"They don't understand it. He never meant to bring religion into contempt," said Bertha.

"No, not true religion I grant you—but he brings *their* religion into contempt, and they would not be human if they could stand it. It is the cleverest and best thing he has ever done, but he must be content for the rest of his life to live under the ban of the clergy. I met the Bishop of Camford the other night at Lady Greville's. They were talking about our friend.

"‘A pestilent radical!’ said the Bishop, quite angry, ‘as radical in religion as he is in politics. His *Quæstio Quæstionum* is an insult to the Christian religion, the Church, and the clergy.’

"You know her ladyship is a little wicked and dearly loves to tease.

"‘But really, Bishop, is it not exceedingly clever? I thought it was so true, that I sent it on to dear Mr. Whippingham at Moseley, our parish church, you know, and told him he would find materials for a hundred new sermons in it, if he ever indulged in such luxuries. I have heard him preaching there since I was a little girl, and I can always tell his text from the colour of the manuscript.’

"‘I am sorry you treat it so lightly, madam,’ said the Bishop. ‘This is the most scandalous book I ever read, far more dangerous to the true interests of the Church of God than the *Age of Reason*. We can stand against argument, but we cannot endure ridicule of sacred things. Mr. Jobson may be grateful that the bull *de heretico comburendo* is not in force. I for one should like to see his book at all events burned by the common hangman.’

"This, you see, is the spirit of clerical Christianity in the nineteenth century."

Bertha Jobson shuddered. She shuddered because she could not bear to think of her Taddy as the subject of such hatred as this. To think that many thousands of clergymen, and many more thousands of the devout laity of Tory politics, were feeling towards her nephew as the Bishop felt, was dreadful.

"Ought he not to be spoken to? Could *you* not advise him?"

"What shall I advise him? Do you wish me to counsel a man of thought and principle not to think—not to express his thoughts?"

"Not exactly that—but perhaps—I don't know—to be more discreet."

"Discretion to Jobson means hypocrisy. It would be asking him to suppress the best part of himself. No. He must fight it out. It is very doubtful to me whether he will conquer—but he will have fought *non sine gloria*, and he will die honest."

"What dreadful things they say about him in the papers."

"That cuts two ways. It makes a martyr of him, and proves he is worth attacking. But then again he is unfortunate. The quarrel he had with the Spillman brood has set nearly the whole publishing fraternity against him. All the diners at the senior's House, all the people who write for them, all the papers and periodicals they can influence are down upon him. It appears incredible that any great firm should allow itself to be influenced by so petty a vengeance, but it is none the less true. Their hatred is inveterate and unsleeping. And you see they are able to get some of the ablest critics of the day to cut him up. The applause of 'critics' is very much like kissing—goes by favour. And so does their rage."

"What a worldly man you are!" cried Bertha Jobson throwing a soft, beaming glance on Winnistoun's great and gentle face, round which the whitening hairs were throwing a silver frame.

"Perhaps," he said, softly. "But, as *you* know, not wholly without sentiment. Taddy is *our* joint care. Let us watch him henceforth a little more closely."

CHAPTER LI.

MISS RAYMOND.

THE Armathwaite will case, "*Sandon and Others against Raymond*," was in itself and its relations to Jobson a perfect romance. Its true history, hereafter to be set forth, from the papers which I have had an opportunity of perusing, and from the lips of one of the persons chiefly concerned, will afford a curious example of the working of a complicated and injurious system called by civilisation "law," and practised in more primitive societies as robbery. A sarcastic friend of mine has written with keen irony and a certain justice, this diatribe upon the law-practice in England, ignoring the fact that the best operation of law is its silent and powerful influence in regulating the acts and morals of society, and that it is only the occasional exceptions in its administration, against which his sarcasm could be legitimately directed.

"In no country in the world is this product of human folly or infirmity so 'pure' as in England—so aver the English writers, who split hairs over its impracticable puzzles, and judges, in whose laps or bosoms a good deal of it resides in an indigested condition. The truth is, however, that between the incoherence and indefiniteness of its precepts, the ingenuity of its administrators, and the rascality of its minions—commonly called 'attorneys' or 'solicitors'—the 'law' in England is the most exquisitely constructed machine for fraud and injustice ever known to have existed amongst the human race. It is the rich man's weapon and the poor man's bane. The very elasticity on which so many of its panegyrists plume themselves makes it a glorious uncertainty—and in some of the most important cases involving some of the profoundest principles of jurisprudence, judges of equal status have been found in equal numbers to

give opinions exactly the opposite of one another. As if this were not bad enough, there has grown around the administration of the system—unsettled, uncoded, variable with the whims, caprices, prejudices, political or religious or moral or immoral opinions, of the judges—a profession of harpies whose interest it is to complicate it still further, to prolong or defeat its operations, to use it as an instrument of plunder. The man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho was a happy man compared with the modern gentleman who ‘goes to his solicitor:’ and the Pope might well decree the benefits of Purgatory to have been gained by the person who has gone through the pains of an English law-suit.”

What it may mean to a woman, whose case was one of as clear and undoubted right as ever claimed the aid of human justice, was discovered by Miss Florence Raymond, who was the defendant in the great Armathwaite will case.

In the third Long Vacation after his marriage, Jobson and his wife went to pass a few weeks in Switzerland. At Lausanne they met some old friends of the Dean, Lord and Lady Bratling of Bratling in Devon. Lord Bratling, an ex-diplomatist, had been made a peer by Lord Melbourne’s Government. He was a Whig, and a man of the world, and though he had read and heard a good deal about Jobson’s extreme views and rash political conduct, not to speak of the vulgar conceit which it was the habit of persons who had never read his speeches or his works to attribute to him, the peer took it into his head to study him as a curiosity and was astonished to find him a gentleman. Lady Bratling, though fairly on in years, had all the grace and accomplishments which ladies are wont to acquire, in spite of themselves, during a long diplomatic career—and to begin with she had been a clever woman. The charm, the liveliness, the vivacity of her conversation quite threw into the shade the soberer, though profounder, qualities of her husband. She loved society, she loved sketching, she loved gossip: a little scandal always piqued her, and her religion was that of the Church of England. It is scarcely possible to imagine a happier

combination for a woman of the world. She was young enough in feeling to love people younger than herself, and her bosom friend was Miss Florence Raymond, who had accompanied the peeress to Switzerland. Lady Bratling scarcely affected to conceal that she was over fifty, while Miss Raymond was at least twenty years younger than her friend. This young lady almost immediately established intimate relations with Mr. and Mrs. Thaddæus Jobson.

She was pretty and at times even handsome, when the rich blood mantled in her face, and seemed to course violently through her system. Then her fine dark eyes grew luminous with the fire of earnestness, and her lips, a little too full perhaps, parted to show as fine a set of teeth as ever graced a beauty's mouth. Yet her brow was low and not striking, her nose was insignificant without being irregular, her face had a roundness, which increased its jolity, if it did not enhance its æsthetic effect; her complexion was inclined to a healthy swarthy, but with a fine flush beneath the brown: her hands and feet were neat and small and always cherished in a very dainty manner by their admiring owner: and, as for her figure, though it indicated maturity, it was elegant and well-knit. The ease of her manners showed that Miss Raymond was accustomed to society, and she was not afraid sometimes to indulge in some of the slang which she had acquired in the company of a handful of brothers, of whom she was the only sister. What with her eyes, and her teeth, and her figure, and her hands and feet, and her natural liveliness, Miss Florence Raymond was to be forgiven if she showed herself a bit of a coquette. But, beyond this harmless weakness, never was a sounder-hearted English girl launched upon the wicked world.

Jobson soon struck up a friendship with the young lady. Mrs. Thaddæus (owing to circumstances, *etc.*) was not able to go about much; Lord and Lady Bratling were not very active: hence Jobson found himself very often thrown into Miss Raymond's company, whether sketching "bits" in the old Cathedral, or wandering along past Ouchy by the lake side, or taking long climbs on the Jorat, or boating it on the Lake. Our hero's heart always opened to women if they

were intelligent, sympathetic, and knew how to draw him, and Miss Raymond was an experienced worldling to whom at that time he was a mere chicken. She admired his cleverness, she enjoyed his humour, she even liked his seriousness which at times was somewhat quaint and ungracious, and she could not help liking his handsome face and his bright open, clear eyes. If the intercourse between these two people led to a little intimacy of sentiment, of liking, of friendliness, there never was anything more genuinely harmless. Jobson's strong fresh wit received a fillip from the clever girl's dashing comments and epigrams, and he often divulged to her some of the greater thoughts that weighed upon his mind. She appreciated the compliments thus incidentally conveyed, never yawned when Jobson was most profound or exalted, and tried now and then to throw in an idea or two which gave him the notion that she was a woman of a much more serious intelligence than her best friends suspected.

The two parties travelled together to Geneva, to Chamouny, to the Val d'Aosta, and finally to Berne, where they parted company. The day before Jobson was to leave on his return to England, he and Miss Raymond took a long walk in the Enge. She was silent and pensive, two characteristics so unusual that Jobson, after himself doing a good deal of talking, rallied her.

"Why, what is the matter with you, Miss Raymond? You scarcely open your mouth. You cannot be depressed at the thought of losing us——"

"Scarcely, sir," she replied rapidly, "if you mean the editorial 'we' or 'us.' Tall gentlemen with plenty of conversation, good faces, blue eyes, and blond complexions are as plentiful as French waiters on the Continent."

"Well hit. I wasn't thinking of the egotistic 'we,' though. I was only hinting one method of accounting for the unaccountable. You have not been so dull since we first met you."

"I am thinking."

"Ah! No wonder you are dull. Women are only bright when they are spontaneous—I——"

"Mr. Jobson!" She had jumped in front of him.

"Madam."

"Shut up—you are talking stuff, and in my present frame of mind I can't bear it. Give me your arm, please. I want to talk to you seriously, confidentially—as a friend—may I?"

Two bright eyes looking up into his, and two full lips, a pearly gleam between them, and a frank sunny smile on a pleasant face—this is what Jobson saw when he looked down, as he felt a hand softly clasp his arm. What could he say?

"*Mzy* you?"

"Walk faster, please. I am going to talk fast, and it will help me: and don't interrupt me. Do you know anything about my antecedents?"

"You told me not to speak, I thought. Nothing whatever—nothing but what you have hinted to Mrs. Jobson and myself."

"Hem! Well, what I am going to tell you, Mr. Jobson is for your own ear only. Not a living soul is to hear it from you. Will you promise?"

Jobson was silent. He was a little taken aback. He did not understand his companion. She whipped her hand away from his arm and stopped.

"Why do you hesitate? You are not a true friend," she said, a little anger reddening in her face.

"Well, frankly, Miss Raymond—I don't know what to say. Forgive me. What is the nature of your communication?"

"How like a barrister's cross-examination! Complimentary! You suspect, I suppose, that I am going to compromise myself or you or somebody else. I shall keep my confidence to myself, Mr. Jobson, and am obliged to you for giving me a lesson." She seemed about to turn away.

"Stay, my dear Miss Raymond—I am only taken aback at the idea of being father-confessor to a young lady. I see how absurd my suspicion was, and I beg pardon, and to atone for it, here, take my arm and say what you like—I promise."

"Very well." She took his arm again and began to walk rapidly.

"You know I am an orphan, and though I have ever so many brothers, being the only girl, I have pretty well had to look after myself. Imagine that you know everything that had taken place from my birth up to twenty-two years of age—fast, frivolous, and fascinating, of course, with just enough per annum to enable me to dress and look like a lady. Well, I had a school friend, *àtât* twenty, as the biographies say, Jenny Armathwaite, a very clever girl, though never in good health. We were inseparable friends. When she was in town I was at her father's house every day, and when they went down to the country I always spent weeks with them. Mr. Armathwaite was a widower, over fifty years of age, and very rich. He had been an East India merchant, but was retired from business. Jenny's mother, his wife, was a pretty woman, but in feeble health, and died when Jenny was about fourteen. Mr. Armathwaite always treated me with great kindness and even familiarity, really more like a daughter than a stranger, and he liked me to be with Jenny because I was lively and kept up her spirits."

"That you could do to perfection."

"—I told you not to interrupt. One summer Mr. Armathwaite proposed to travel by the Rhine and through Switzerland, to Venice and Rome. As Jenny seemed frightened at the prospect of the journey he asked me to go with them, and I consented. At this time she was in decline—we had to travel by slow stages, and although she was able from time to time to go out a good deal, yet she was often confined to her room for days, and during that time I was to some extent her father's companion. She used to beg me to leave her with her maid and accompany her father in his excursions. In all his intercourse with me he was polite and reserved. On arriving at Venice late in the autumn, we put up at the Danielli's, and there we found three people whom I had never seen, who, having seen Mr. Armathwaite arrive, addressed him as friends, came in the evening to his private rooms and seemed to be intimate with him. Jenny was quite astonished at the familiarity of these people, while her father was clearly uncomfortable, but the people made themselves quite at home in a vulgar fashion. Their party

consisted of a mother, son, and daughter. The mother might have been good-looking once but had obviously never been a lady by birth or education. She was now a large woman of over forty-five, with a red face, excessively dressed, and a very extravagant and fantastic manner. The son was the most horrid. His face was very narrow and sharpened down at the chin almost to a point only slightly tufted with a thin growth of yellow moss."

"Well described," said Jobson. "You have the real literary faculty."

"Stuff, sir, which is quite green. Let me go on. His nose, which was a thin and sharp one, was slightly twisted; he had high cheek-bones over which a sallow skin was tightly drawn like the parchment over a drum, and then he had a prodigious development of head covered with thick carrot hair. His eyes were very small and brown and cunning-looking. He used to squeeze them up as if his sight were bad, but really to conceal the fact that he was looking at you, or to defend himself from your gaze. This fellow, with his broad, vulgar pronunciation, common manners, and most disagreeable presence, astounded Jenny and myself by the familiarity with which he addressed Mr. Armathwaite, whom he evidently knew. The girl was a mere soppy imitation of her mamma and requires no describing. I forgot to say that these horrid people called themselves Chaplin and the young man was a doctor. He sat himself down beside Jenny and began questioning her about her health. We were all relieved when this strange visit was over. Jenny asked her father:

"'Who are those horrid people, papa? You seem to know them very well.'

"'Oh! the late Mr. Chaplin was an old friend of mine, many years ago, and I have occasionally helped the young man in his profession.'

"'He's a dreadful creature,' she said. 'He asked after my health as if he were my physician.'

"'I noticed a curious sensation pass over the father's frame as she said this.'

"The next day these people came again, and all together. Their familiarity was even more obtrusive and

disgusting than it had been the night before. They coolly joined themselves to our party. When Mr. Armathwaite and I went out sight-seeing the Doctor attached himself to us while the mother and daughter remained at home with Jenny.

"When I got home I found Jenny in a state of great agitation. She took my hand and, drawing me into her room, threw herself on my shoulder and burst into tears.

" 'O Florry,' she cried, 'never leave me alone again with those horrible women—promise me you won't. They have been pelting me with questions the whole time, such strange questions about papa, and mamma, and my health ; they are without exception the most disagreeable persons I ever met.'

"I agreed.

" 'How can papa ever have known such people? They say they know him intimately, that he is an old friend. And don't you notice how fidgety and helpless he seems when they come?'

"Knowing how necessary it was to keep poor Jenny as calm as possible, I soothed her, and accounted for the Chaplins' conduct by their vulgarity and ignorance. But next day they turned up again. Mrs. Chaplin declared that she was going to take Jenny into her own care, and that her son should give her the benefit of his medical advice. It looked as if they were going to take charge of the whole party, and I was astonished to see that Mr. Armathwaite, who was naturally a man of rather decided temper, was unable to make any opposition to their domineering tactics. Jenny got into such a state of nervousness that she was really ill, and the woman and her son drew near her on the sofa and pestered her with attentions and enquiries. My blood got up. I began to suspect that there was something behind all this. I couldn't talk aside with Mr. Armathwaite, as the daughter kept close by him, so I took the bull by the horns.

"I went up to Jenny, who was lying on the sofa.

" 'I beg your pardon,' I said, 'but my friend is not very well to day. You will excuse her I am sure if I take her to my room.'

“‘O I will take her, Miss,’ said the woman rising. ‘You are rather young, I fancy, to have charge of such a case. It is one requiring great judgment and experience, eh, Alf?’

“The name of the young doctor brute was Alf.

“‘O no, no, no!’ suddenly cried out Jenny, sobbing in my arms as if her heart would break. ‘Take the woman away, and that horrid man. What do they want?’

“Tableau! which I can’t describe.

“Old Mr. Armathwaite jumped up and, rudely pushing aside mother and son, nearly knocking the latter over, he gave his daughter his arm, and he and I assisted her to her room. Then he returned to the parlour, and I heard high voices. Jenny had thoroughly collapsed and was ill for twenty-four hours. She besought me not to leave her.

“‘Sleep in my room, dear—don’t leave me. Those people have some design against me. Who are they? What does it all mean?’

“The next morning Mr. Armathwaite called me out of the room:

“‘Get ready,’ he said, after making enquiries. ‘We are to leave early to-morrow morning. Say nothing to anyone about it. You can tell Jenny in the evening.’

“It all seemed very strange and mysterious. The woman and her son came in the morning and tried to force themselves into Jenny’s bedroom, but Mr. Armathwaite’s valet was on the watch, and kept them out. We got off clear next morning and went to Florence. Jenny was delighted and soon recovered her health and spirits. We had spent some delightful weeks in Florence, and were preparing to go to Turin, when one day we were disgusted and astonished by the arrival of the Chaplins at our hotel. Mr. Armathwaite was in a rage, but he seemed to be almost afraid of them. Jenny immediately took to her bed and vowed she would not leave it, and the door was kept locked, with her maid as sentinel, for the two women had tried to get in to see her. I was completely nonplussed. Anything more outrageous than their impudence I had never seen, and I could not understand how Mr. Armathwaite endured them at all.

"The young doctor took an opportunity of talking to me when I was in the sitting-room.

"Don't you think your friend Miss Armathwaite has a very strange manner?' he said.

"No, sir, I do not.'

"There is something very peculiar in her eye—'

"So there is in yours, Doctor Chaplin, but what of it?'

"O, you mean to be rude—we will talk no more about it.'

"Your servant, sir,' I said, with a low courtesy, and I left the room.

"From that time it was war to the knife between us. I was certainly as rude to them as I could be, and they were not behindhand in returning the compliment.

"Three days after their arrival, Mr. Armathwaite, who had sunk into quite a state of depression, begged me to go out for a walk with him. We went along the Arno and up the hill. He was excited, and kept looking about to see that no one was following us.

"Miss Raymond,' he said, 'I know you are a sensible girl—a good deal beyond your years, and I am going to tell you something that will shock you, but I feel that I must do it for my daughter's sake. Forgive me, if I make you, young as you are, acquainted with a sinful and sorrowful story, but I have a feeling that you, who seem, both to her and to me, like Jenny's sister, ought to know what I am going to tell you, and are strong and sensible enough to hear it. You have no doubt noticed how forward and familiar those people are who have followed us here, and how feebly I am able to bear up against them. Well, the fact is they are a trio of designing intriguers, who have got something against me which they are determined to use, and they will not allow any considerations of honour or morality to interfere with their schemes. Years ago, before I married my late wife, when I was a young and rich fellow, I formed a *liaison* with a nursery governess at a friend's house, and for some years provided for her. That woman has been the bane of my life. She has lived upon me and out of me ever since. She is as insatiable as a dragon. I gave her money to marry

a music-teacher named Chaplin, a poor miserable beast of a fellow, whose two children you know. I kept her and Chaplin for years, paying them large sums on condition that they stayed out of England and I never saw them. I educated that young red-headed cub—thank God! he is not my son, though she is ready to swear, I daresay, that he is—and that vulgar minx Miss Chaplin, and precious little it has done for them. I don't believe the money I sent was spent on them. Now they are bothering me to remember them in my will—the rascally young medico thinks he knows I shan't live very long—and he is perfectly right. I have a disease of the heart which will take me off suddenly some day. Well then, they hinted to me the other day that poor Jenny was not quite in her right mind, and that she ought to be placed in charge of some physician, and kept under control. You cannot conceive the horror which passed through me when that cold-blooded knave first suggested the thing—I could have struck him down. Imagine my feelings, knowing I can't live long, and that the poor girl hasn't a single relation in the world she can rely on, to know that these people, as desperate and designing devils as ever trod ground, have fastened their eyes on her, and will leave no stone unturned to get her into their power if anything should happen to me. They will follow us wherever we go, and if I were to drop off, no one knows what they would do.'

"He stopped, and took off his hat, and wiped away the drops of anguish which covered his forehead."

CHAPTER LII.

MISS RAYMOND'S STORY (CONTINUED).

AS our Jobson listened to this tale from the lips of the young lady, he did not know whether to be more shocked by the confession which Armathwaite had made to her, or at the candour of the young lady to himself. But glancing at her, and seeing the animation with which she spoke, the resolve in her face, the quiet earnestness of her manner, he was convinced that, in making him her confidant, she was occupied with the simple desire to obtain a friend on whom she could rely. He was just one of those men—at once strong, grave, and gentle, with other attractions of manner or face—to whom women will make strange confidences. The two had now come to a seat from which they could look out over a glorious panorama, and he begged her to sit down. She proceeded with her narrative.

“Mr. Armathwaite finished his story thus: ‘You must know that my daughter neither is aware of nor suspects anything of what I have told you. If she did, it would kill her: and much has it cost me in hard cash as well as in self-respect to keep it a secret from her. You see how the Chaplins live—they travel about, they spend money, sometimes I have sent them two or three thousand pounds in one year. I dare not consult a solicitor—I have confided my secret to nobody but you. The young carrotty-headed ruffian’—the old gentleman, by the way, always preceded any reference to these people by an expressive participle, not pious—‘is as cold-blooded as a snake **and** as cunning as the devil himself. He is never son of mine—whatever they may say. Now they are threatening, if I don’t remember them handsomely in my will, to worry my poor child after I am gone. Their letters to me are

atrocious. Now, Florry, you are her best friend in the world, and you are a brave determined little woman. If anything happens to me, I leave her in your charge. Promise me you will look after her and see that she is protected from these vultures. If anything should happen to me and I should die before we get home, leave for London as soon as you can, taking my body with you, and above all never let that (*blank*) young cut-throat into a room where Jenny is. He is capable of any crime.'

"Mr. Armathwaite was dreadfully agitated. For my part I did not know what to do. I was so upset by his revelations, and so young and inexperienced, and moreover I was oppressed by the terrible responsibility he was trying to throw upon me. He seized my hand and besought me to make the promise, while tears ran down his cheeks.

"At length I consented. Then he kissed my hands. He covered me with thanks. He said :

"'You have made me happy. You have taken off the nightmare of years. I have not a single relative I can trust. The nearest is a second cousin, whom I have never seen—who would succeed if Jenny were to die—and would of course be delighted if she did. The moment I return I will alter my will and make you the residuary legatee. Henceforth, Florry, you are as my own child.'

"We went back to the inn. He was in admirable spirits. At the door we met Dr. Alfred Chaplin.

"'We propose to dine with you to night,' he said familiarly to Mr. Armathwaite, squeezing up his eyes to see the effect of his announcement.

"'Then I am very sorry I can't receive you! Miss Armathwaite is not well, and my little party will dine privately in our parlour. Renny,' he called out loudly to his man, who was always on duty outside Jenny's room on the ground floor, 'see that no person whatever is admitted to our rooms to-night, and ask them to give us dinner at seven.'

"Without taking any notice of Chaplin's scowls he went in and had a long talk with his daughter. Afterwards I found her in the best of spirits. She clasped me in her arms, and thanked me repeatedly.

"‘Papa told me,’ she said. ‘that you will always be a sister to me. You will watch over me, won’t you? And he is going to leave you a lot of money. I am so glad!’

"He had said nothing to her about his relations with the Chaplins. We passed the pleasantest evening together we had spent upon the Continent. Mr. Armathwaite was unwontedly genial and communicative. Jenny was delighted.

"‘Do you know,’ she said when we got into her room, ‘he would have married you if you would have had him?’

"The next morning, while I was dressing, a knock came at the door. I put out my head and saw Renny with a face as pale as death. He laid his finger on his lips and whispered—

"‘Come out, Miss, please, at once. You’re wanted. Master’s ill.’

"In two minutes I was at Mr. Armathwaite’s bedside. He was lying with his eyes closed and gasping for breath. Before I could do anything, the lids opened, his lips moved. I listened close.

"‘Remember!’ he whispered, and then with a single shudder he died.

"I was dumb with horror, but Renny, who had been with him for twenty years, burst out in loud lamentations. I had mechanically arranged the bed, when the door opened and Dr. Chaplin entered. He glanced at Renny and me, and then without speaking walked to the body and carefully examined the dead. Having satisfied himself that all was over, he turned to Renny, and said—

"‘You will allow no one in this room but me. I shall take charge of Miss Armathwaite from this moment. I expect she will need it,’ he added, looking at me with a significant sneer. ‘I suppose, Miss Raymond, you would like to go back to London as soon as possible?’

"Renny, who had not failed to notice his master’s detestation of this man, stopped his grief and stared at him. I was trembling, but, aroused by his voice and manner, I resolved to act promptly and decidedly.

"‘No, sir. I am not going back, except with Miss Armathwaite, who is the heiress to Mr. Armathwaite’s property and of age, and I am charged by my poor friend

whose body lies here to take care of her. I shall not require your assistance.'

"'You !' he said, eyeing me from head to foot, his face taking on a diabolical smile. 'You are not fit to take care of yourself; still less of a *lunatic* lady! I beg you to observe that I am her natural guardian and protector at this moment. The man who lies here was my father.'

"Renny's jaw dropped and his hands hung flaccid at his side. He stared alternately at the Doctor and me. He was evidently borne down by the man's brazen assumption.

"'Nonsense, Renny!' I said, 'look at that man and see whether you can trace a single feature of your late master in his face! I assure you he is no son of Mr. Armathwaite's, and he warned me against him only last night, and charged me solemnly to protect Miss Jenny from his villainy. You will help me to take care of your young mistress, won't you?'

"I went over to Renny and took his arm. He seemed to expand. He was a big strong fellow, about fifty years of age and physically more than a match for the Doctor.

"'If you're a son of my late master,' he said recovering and looking Chaplin all over, 'I'll eat you! And a willin' you are to come in here by his dyin' bedside a tellin' such a crammer. If you don't take your carrotty head and pasty face out of this in one minute, out you goes neck and crop into the back-yard,' and Renny made a step forward in spite of my efforts to check him.

"The red-haired and white-livered fellow, throwing a glance of rage at me, made for the door, saying as he went out—

"'We'll soon see about that.'

"Renny and I immediately secured the few valuables and papers the old gentleman had with him, and conveyed them to my room, where we put them under lock and key, and, while I stood guard, Renny consulted the landlord about the necessary arrangements, and went for a physician to certify to the cause of death, and embalm the body. By great good luck he got Dr. Palma, who had married an English wife, and was a favourite physician with English

visitors. He was a fine benevolent man, of grand physique, spoke English excellently, and, like all good doctors, put himself immediately on terms of friendship with his patients.

"I had had a terrible scene with poor Jenny, and took him to see her. He was very much alarmed by her weakness, though gratified to find that she wept freely. In the intervals of her grief she gave him clear and explicit directions, and asked him to arrange with the English Chaplain that, before we left, a short service should be said over the body.

"As we went out Renny stood at the door.

"'There's three or four people along with that there doctor chap waiting in the sitting-room, Miss. Will you go to them, with this gentleman? I'll stay here. Not a soul shall enter Miss Jenny's room 'cept over my dead body.'

"I asked Doctor Palma to go with me, telling him briefly I expected something unpleasant from an adventurer claiming to be the son of the deceased. Sure enough in the room were Doctor Chaplin and three gentlemen. Doctor Palma and three strangers, who evidently knew each other, exchanged courtesies. They seemed, however, a little put out at sight of him.

"'What does this mean?' asked Dr. Palma, with surprise in his face. He spoke in Italian, which I understood perfectly and Dr. Chaplin did not.

"'An information has been lodged by this English Signor, a relative of an English lord who has just died here, that the daughter of the deceased is not sane, and, as this gentleman wishes to make the necessary arrangements, we have been called upon to examine and report concerning her condition.'

"Dr. Palma straightened himself up, took out his snuff-box, tapped it, opened it and after presenting it to his *confrères*, and to the third gentleman who was a police official of some rank, he turned quietly to Dr. Chaplin, and said in English :

"'Pardon, sir, but who are you?'

"He put this question with such calmness and dignity that the young sawbones, though he struggled to be impudent, blushed and averted his eye.

“‘I am the son of the deceased, sir.’

“‘Is this true, madame?’ said Doctor Palma, turning to me.

“‘No,’ I said. ‘Only yesterday Mr. Armathwaite told me it was untrue. This person is no relation.’

“Doctor Palma rapidly translated to the Italians.

“The police official took a note and suggested a question.

“‘Have you any evidence?’

“‘Yes. My mother. She is here.’

“‘Mrs. Armathwaite is here?’ replied Dr. Palma, with the same quiet, half-scornful intonation, yet turning with some surprise to me.

“‘N—no!’ answered the fellow, blushing in spite of himself. ‘My mother’s name is Chaplin.’

“‘Oh!’ said Doctor Palma, shrugging his shoulders, and throwing a cold contempt into his voice, ‘even if the thing you tell is true—which I do not affect to doubt—it gives you no legal *status*.’ He translated to the officer, who nodded, and took another note.

“‘And now, gentlemen,’ continued the Doctor, addressing the two colleagues, “I am happily very well known to you. I have just passed half an hour with the young lady, of whom this—person”—he indicated Doctor Chaplin by a motion of his snuff-box—‘says that she is not sane. *Confrères*, she is as sane as you or I—not to make too great a compliment to ourselves. This young lady is her friend. The daughter is legally of age in England, and has given me all the necessary directions for preparing the body for transportation to England. I make myself responsible for the sanity of the young lady. I shall, Signor Uffizi, make the examination and verify the cause of death, happy if these my friends will assist me. I suppose I may inform this young gentleman that any interference on his part will be illegal—and I assume, *Signorina*—I may add on your behalf and that of the heiress—an impertinence.’ And he did say so with a stolid coldness and directness which in other circumstances would have made me laugh with delight.

“Doctor Chaplin bit his lip, and, white with passion, turned to leave the room, when in rushed Mrs. Chaplin

with her hair and dress disordered, her face running with tears.

“ ‘O where is he? Where is he? Let me see his dear body. O—O—O—O’ and so on, making a frightful noise.

“ ‘*Ecco la lunatica !*’ said Doctor Palma without moving a muscle, as she ran about the room and beat her breast. ‘Young gentleman—I think you belong to our honourable profession? If this is the *madre*, let me advise you to turn your skill and attention to her, before you take up cases to which you are not invited. Follow me, gentlemen. After you, *Signorina.*’ ”

CHAPTER LIII.

MISS RAYMOND'S STORY (CONTINUED).

“**T**HANKS to good Dr. Palma, our arrangements were made in twenty-four hours, and we set off, posting as rapidly as we could. As it was late in the season we had to go by the Cornici road, and when we got to Nice we rested for a day. Ten hours after us the Chaplins, who had been in full chase, entered the hotel. It was, however, full of English people. Desperation makes one energetic, and I ferreted out an officer who had known Mr. Armathwaite, and, telling him our story, claimed his protection. It was required. The Doctor Chaplin went to the authorities, and, aided by two policemen, tried to force his way into Jenny's room. Renny knocked one of the police downstairs. Major Dobbs, who was on the look-out, ran up at the noise, and threw Doctor Chaplin after the constable, and the third man ran away. The story got out—every Englishman in the place declared that if Chaplin did not leave Nice at once they would hand him over to the authorities, and he and his party ignominiously fled. Jenny was ill for days, but, to make a long story short, Major Dobbs gallantly undertook to see us to Paris, and we safely reached the London house. From that time to her death I never left Miss Armathwaite.

“ But you can have very little conception, my dear Mr. Jobson, of the sort of life we led during those three years. Chaplin followed us to London, hired rooms as near to Jenny's house as he could and set himself to watch us. He got hold of the next heir, Mr. Armathwaite's second cousin, a needy unscrupulous fellow, very ready to be led into any scheme which would secure him the administration of the property. They were clever enough to put him forward as anxious for the welfare of Miss Armathwaite,

and they had the cunning to employ one of the most respectable London solicitors. Their object of course was to catch us napping and get a commission of doctors into Jenny's room. No stone was left unturned which rascality and ingenuity could invent. I have often wondered how and where they got the money to do what they did. Mr. Armathwaite had left by his will only £300 a year for her life to Mrs. Chaplin, so I suppose the attorneys must have found the money for the Chaplins on speculation. They tried to bribe Renny, and Jenny's maid; if we went out of town we were closely followed; and, at Bath or Torquay or Hastings; no sooner did Jenny's bath-chair appear in street, than the carrot head of Dr. Chaplin and the blazing face of his horrid mother were to be seen in the neighbourhood. Renny always went out with us, and the bath-chairman was a detective selected and paid by Jenny's solicitor to watch over her and take his part in defence. Fancy such a state of things in this country! And, as you are aware, there was no practical way of stopping it. But, you may well imagine, life become utterly unendurable to poor Miss Armathwaite. Her physical weakness increased her nervousness, and sometimes I used really to be alarmed lest this perpetual worry should produce its intended effects and throw her mind off its balance.

"At the end of the second year she was in a decline and the doctor ordered her to a warmer climate. With the greatest secrecy we managed to get away from England unperceived, by driving away by night without leaving any direction, after posting rapidly, crossing the Channel, and making our way to Aix. Here we had a delightful three months; we had baffled our persecutors, thanks to the integrity of our servants, and for the first time since her father's death Jenny breathed freely. She even began to walk about and enjoy the gentle air, entered a little into society, and by the charm of her manner and face made some new friends. Among others was the son of the *Maire*, who I think had taken a fancy to her. One day he came to me in a hurry and took me aside. He had run all the way from the *Mairie*.

" 'Do you know, something serious is on the *tapis*?' he

said. 'Three Messieurs have arrived at the *Mairie*—one an English, with hair the colour of a copper kettle, and they make a process that the Mademoiselle Armathwaite is *folle*. My father has said he knows her very well, and they mistake themselves. I pray you to go and warn her, while I seek for Doctor Duchaine, who has seen her every day, to present himself at the *Mairie*. It is a detestable conspiracy. Happily, my father is not easily deceived. And he will protect her.'

"Our happiness was at an end. Through the Mayor's influence the scheme of the Chaplins and Sandon, the cousin, fell through, but Jenny was immediately prostrated by the fright. She implored me to take her back to England at once. This was in March. The Doctor told me if she went back she ran a great risk, but, after holding out a few days, and seeing how terribly her fears preyed upon her, he allowed her to go.

"As soon as she had arrived at home she said :

"'Florry, I have come here to die. Those people are driving me to my grave. I don't care to live. But I am resolved *they* shall make nothing by my death. I shall follow my father's wishes and leave you everything, after providing for the servants. My father's solicitors are Bland, Bland and Smirke'—mark the name, Mr. Jobson ; you must know it ; they are called one of the most 'respectable' houses in London. 'Sit down,' said Jenny, 'and write to Mr. Bland, senior, to make an appointment as early as possible to receive directions for my will.

"Her doctor called next day, and at my request he brought Sir Henry Holland. They said she would live only a few days. She asked me to send for Sir Edward Belknap, one of her father's friends, a jolly, kindly old baronet of Norfolk. He told me after his interview that she asked him to act as co-executor with me, but she did not tell him to whom she meant to leave her money. Mr. Bland was closeted a long time with Miss Armathwaite, and when he came out he said to me, with a significant look :

"'The documents will be ready to-morrow for execution. I shall come at eleven o'clock. Our poor friend, I fear, is sinking—sinking fast.' At the moment when he said this

his eye was glistening as he looked through some bright old Madeira which he held in a glass between himself and the light. 'Your good health, Miss Raymond. You deserve a fair fortune.'

"Do you happen to know Mr. Bland?" inquired Miss Raymond of Jobson, breaking off in her narrative.

"I have never seen him," replied he.

"Well, he is about fifty-two or three years of age. A stout man, with a grizzly head of hair, goggle eyes, a flattish nose, thin lips, and an immense chin close-shaven. He always dresses well—in black; wears a dress coat, and a large white cravat, like a poultice: in fact he is a typical family solicitor, with a fine fruity port-wine complexion, and deferential manner. But I always felt that there was a dangerous cunning under his imposing exterior.

"Well. I wrote and asked Sir Edward to be present next day. After what Jenny had said I was naturally a little anxious, and I may have been wrong in doing that; but I give you my word I never during those two days spoke a word to Jenny, or Jenny to me, about the disposition of her property. At eleven Sir Edward, the solicitor, and I were together in the drawing-room. The lawyer had brought a clerk with him to witness the will. They went into Jenny's room, where she was sitting up supported by pillows, and I suppose the will was read over. At all events Mr. Bland came out and said that the business was concluded and that he was taking the document with him.

"The next day poor Jenny died. Though that was the end to me of the three most terrible years of my life, I was lost in grief. I cannot even now restrain it, when I think of her—forgive me.

"When the funeral was over Mr. Bland read the will. It gave some small legacies to her servants, and one or two friends: some money was left to religious societies in which her father was interested, and the balance of the property, which amounted to some forty thousand pounds, was left absolutely to me. Not a farthing for any of the relations. The second cousin, Mr. Sandon, Doctor Chaplin, who had impudence enough for anything, and several others came to the funeral. The two conspirators listened in silence to

the reading of the will and, immediately it was over, went away.

"‘If ever there was a fellow that ought to be in the dock,’ said Sir Edward Belknap to me afterwards, ‘it is that carrot-headed rascal that came with Mr. Sandon, and sat scowling at you. Who is he?’

"‘That,’ I said, ‘is the man I have been engaged in outwitting for three years. It is Doctor Chaplin.’

"‘Whew!’ he said. ‘I can now understand all our poor friend’s troubles. What a beast!’

"He was not long in finding confirmation of his judgment. We were almost immediately served with a notice from their solicitors, that the will would be contested, on the grounds that it was obtained by undue influence, and that the testatrix was insane.—Are you not tired of my story?"

"O no!" cried Jobson. "It is an interesting romance, though a fearfully disagreeable one. What are you bringing me to now? The case is not settled yet, you say?"

"No—and I want your help, Mr. Jobson. What is to come is more strange even than that which has gone before."

CHAPTER LIV.

MISS RAYMOND (STILL SPEAKING).

“YOU would have thought,” Miss Raymond went on,—
 “at least anyone who was not a barrister would have thought—that, if ever a case was clear and undoubted, it was that of Miss Armathwaite’s will. She had been almost daily in the doctor’s hands for months. Dr. Holland had seen and conversed with her : her old friend Sir Edward Belknap had been consulted by her in long conversations ; her family solicitor had received minute instructions from her, had prepared her will, it had been executed in his presence while I was absent. His name and that of his managing clerk were attached to it as witnesses : it was impossible for him to say other than that she was *compos*. Acting on Sir Edward’s advice I at once retained Mr. Bland as solicitor for the will, and he told me in the first interview that I need not trouble myself about it, that his evidence alone was sufficient to establish my case. Notwithstanding that, Mr. Jobson, the case is still untried—it has been put off from term to term—the money is all locked up—and the only people who seem to be getting any good out of the estate at this moment are the lawyers and barristers.”

“I very much doubt whether many of the latter have seen their fees yet,” remarked Jobson grimly. “We walk by faith and not by sight at the bar very often.”

“However, preparations were made for a crushing reply to the plaintiff’s case. Mr. Bland gave it his ‘personal’ attention. My friend Sir Edward being obliged to go away to Carlsbad, I was left to look after the business alone. I thought we might safely have gone to trial with the witnesses we had—but no ; Mr. Bland informed me they were going to send out a commission to examine witnesses at Aix, Nice, and Venice, and that he would be obliged to attend it. A

splendid opportunity for delay, costs, and a pleasant summer trip! He and the solicitors on the other side arranged it. They had got hold of a good fat estate and were determined to take their pull out of it. The case was carried over the long vacation last year to allow of the commission. Mr. Bland went off—the solicitor on the other side went off—three barristers, a commissioner, and the party spent three months agreeably on the Continent. Little did I ever suspect that this pleasant party, among other amusing things, was tickling itself over my personal character.

“Now I want you to listen particularly. On Mr. Bland’s return home he sent for me. I was in the habit of seeing him at his offices in the city—he had old-fashioned chambers in Bucklersbury. His own room was a large inner one, well furnished and kept very neat, with its tin boxes ranged all round, its big mahogany table, desk, and leather-covered chairs. It was stuffy and imposing. It always impressed me. It had two doors, a heavy one without and a light baize-covered one within, which effectually prevented anyone overhearing from one room to the other. Mr. Bland was so solemn and the room so silent that it quite made me tremble when I found myself alone with him, there in this quiet place in the very heart of London.

“He received me very kindly, however, rising and taking my hand and leading me to a chair. Then he stood and held my hand a moment between both his fat, soft palms, and, half-shutting his eyelids, looked at me queerly. I almost unconsciously shuddered. He said :

“‘My dear young lady—how d’ye do? how d’ye do? Not killed by anxiety, I see. No—you knew all would go well. You were supported by the consciousness of integrity and innocence.’

“I didn’t know what he meant. I drew my hand away quickly, for he was kneading it uncomfortably with his podgy fingers, and, finding it was gone, he retired to his big chair, crossed his hands over his waistcoat and looked at me again.

“‘Well, Mr. Bland,’ I said in some confusion, ‘what have you done on the commission?’

“ ‘Well, Miss Raymond,—on the whole—I should say—I should give it as my decided opinion—after consideration—’

“ ‘—Three months’ consideration, yes, Mr. Bland?’

“ ‘No—pardon me—you see one could not consider, while taking evidence—no—the consideration I have been able to give it—I and Sir Antony Spitlaw—your leading Counsel have been able to give it—since my return, and after reviewing the whole of the evidence—very voluminous you know—I say after this, I should say that your case, on the whole, is proceeding *most* favourably—most favourably—as favourably as could be expected—considerably advanced by the commission.’

“ ‘I should have thought it would have been *settled* by the commission,’ I interrupted impatiently. ‘They have told you only what you knew before, and I don’t see how any more delay can occur.’

“ ‘Ah! ingenuous!—like most—*young*—ladies,’ he said bowing. ‘Older ladies are sometimes more enlightened on these matters. No—hem—to tell you the truth, Miss,’—he settled his big cheeks and chin well into his high collars—‘a little difficulty has arisen—hem—hem—of a delicate character—*personal*, I mean, Miss Raymond—hem—indeed, Miss Raymond, painfully delicate—personal—to yourself.’

“He had screwed his eyes up again and was regarding me through the slits, with his head on one side.

“I felt the blood rush into my face, and I demanded angrily:

“ ‘What do you mean, sir?’

“ ‘Pray! pray! Miss Raymond,’ he said, raising both his hands in a deprecating way. ‘Be calm. Every party to a suit is liable, you know, to have his or her—or even *its*, if a company and neuter—character assailed by the opposite side. It is—ha—you know—ha—one of the tactics of our profession. We attorneys even have to come in for abuse sometimes—ha!—you remember the old joke about the attorney on the other side.’

“ ‘I know nothing about jokes, Mr. Bland—but if you mean to say that anyone has dared to attack my character

on this wretched commission, I will move heaven and earth but I will have my remedy. Tell me what it is, sir !' I cried out loudly, unable to command myself, and jumping to my feet, with my eyes flashing I don't doubt—'Tell me this instant !'

" 'Ah ! My dear young lady—very spirited—you look wonderfully well in that mood—but pray, pray sit down. Be calm. Reassure yourself. No harm is done which we cannot repair. But—permit me to ask—merely as a matter of form, you know—for my part I assure you—I hope I shall prove to you beyond a doubt—not a scintilla of this infamous accusation affects my regard for you—my—but let me ask—were you not *very* intimate with the late father of the lamented testator ?'

" 'Yes—of course I was—he confided his daughter to my care.'

" 'Ahem ! Most exemplary conduct—generous and self-devoting on your part—to attach yourself so warmly to your friend—deserving of the most practical recognition—it will be forty thousand pounds at least, I should say'—he put the tips of the fingers of both hands together and smiled at me sidewise. 'But—ahem !—do you ever remember, in the course of your travels, having been—quite accidentally of course—these little *contretemps* do occasionally happen, you know—placed, at any time, in a compromising—ah !—situation in regard to the late Mr. Armathwaite ?'

" 'No, sir—certainly not—never ! Mr. Armathwaite was a singularly cautious man, and I never remember in my life to have passed a moment alone with him except in public places.'

" 'Do you happen to recall an incident—a little incident—kissing your hands in a public promenade at Florence ?'

" 'Pshaw !' I cried. 'Absurd ! He had just told me the story you know of, and was expressing his gratitude for my promise to take care of his daughter. It was the very day before he died.'

" 'Quite so—quite so ! I told you it did not affect my opinion—most natural, most fatherly. But do you remember a waiter, or something of that sort, named Luigi in the hotel at Florence ?'

“‘Perfectly—Mr. Armathwaite one day knocked him down at the dinner table for impertinence. I never saw him so angry.’

“‘Ha! Well, Luigi has given some evidence here—which goes a great deal farther than your statement—kindly glance your eye over it—I will leave the room for a moment, if you prefer—delicate matters—’

“‘Nonsense! Mr. Bland,’ I exclaimed. ‘Do you suppose I am afraid to read anything a wretch like that could say—who actually threatened to assassinate Mr. Armathwaite, and was turned out of the hotel for it?’

“‘Good—a sense of innocence—I admire your spirit greatly, Miss Raymond. You would make an admirable heroine—or an—an—admirable wife! Did you ever think of that?’

“He had settled himself into his collar again, and was looking at me with his head on one side and his eyes half-shut exactly like a fat pouter-pigeon.

“‘No, sir!’ I said, annoyed, and threw down the paper. ‘You need not trouble yourself about that, Mr. Bland. Renny, Mr. Armathwaite’s servant, and Miss Armathwaite’s maid, who is now in my service, can easily disprove that.’

“‘I never had a doubt, my dear young lady, believe me, I never had a doubt. My opinion of you is far too high ever to have admitted to my mind a single iota of suspicion. But Miss Raymond—you are young—and attractive, and now, thanks to your dear lamented friend—rich, you have a character to preserve—and—unfortunately—innocence does not always get off unspotted by the world’s scandals. Forgive me—I wish to speak to you now as a friend—as one who—from the first time I had the privilege of seeing you—ha—felt no ordinary interest in you. Indeed, Miss Raymond—let me—ha—assure you that I have entered into this case with energy and zeal—not wholly professional—not wholly professional, I can assure you. There was another reason—a deeper motive. I saw you handsome—young—ingenuous—spirited—left—ha—comparatively to your own resources, and liable to become the prey of designing adventurers. My dear young lady, I can assure

you, the situation—one that appealed to the manliest feelings—the deepest sympathies of one's nature—affected me. I was drawn to you by something beyond ordinary professional attachment; every opportunity I have since had of seeing you has only confirmed my first impressions and—may I say?—has contributed to increase my esteem—my admiration—and—ha!—my affection.'

"'O!' I cried, 'Mr. Bland, please don't go on any more—'

"'Forgive me, Miss Raymond—Florence—I must finish. I have used the word "affection," which but imperfectly conveys the idea of my real feelings. I beg you, Miss Raymond, to consider—I offer you myself just as I am—a little mature in years, I daresay—but with all the more experience to make me worthy of your regard. I have a very honourable position—an honourable profession—a good practice—the means of making you happy and comfortable. Now, Miss Raymond, even at a moment when you are about to be exposed to a most injurious scandal, I come to you and say—I do not believe it. I am certain of your innocence. I, honest John Bland, will defend you against the world. I will shield you from infamy. Will you accept my services and my devotion?'

—"And the gentleman rose, and came over and took my hand.

"I snatched it away.

"'Really, Mr. Bland,' I said, 'this is too ridiculous. A man of your age ought to know better.'

"He tried to take my hand again. I jumped up and pushed him away.

"'Mr. Bland, if you don't leave me alone, I shall cry out!'

"His face grew pale, and he stood and looked at me, his eyes expanded and his lips pressed together.

"'Do you absolutely refuse me?' he said between his teeth.

"'Yes. Let me have no more of it, sir.'

"'Very well, Miss Raymond. Now mark me. You will be sorry for this. I decline to be any longer responsible for your case. I wash my hands of it. You must find

someone else to defend you from the serious imputations which are to be thrown on your character. Will you or will you not agree at least to reconsider your words?’

“ ‘You are an old wretch!’ I cried out beside myself.

“ He gasped for breath. ‘I say you are a base fellow!’ I went on again. ‘I loathe and despise you. Let me out, sir!’

“ And I ran to the door, opened it, and, dashing through the office to the astonishment of the clerks, gained the street.

“ Within a week I received a letter from Bland, Bland and Smirke which was as cunning a concoction as the person my brother used to call ‘Old Nick’ ever suggested to the minds of the wickedest attorney. It stated that they had carefully considered the evidence taken by the commission, which was of a very compromising character to me, and had arrived at the conclusion that, inasmuch as the case was likely to raise up disagreeable and injurious enquiries concerning the testator’s late lamented father, besides bringing to light many other family and personal matters of a disagreeable nature, it would be better for all parties that the suit should be settled *on terms*, which they were prepared and advised me to negotiate with the plaintiffs; and (the hand of Mr. Bland was visible in every line of the precious communication) they begged me seriously to reflect that this advice coming directly from their senior, Mr. Bland, who was one of the most important witnesses in the case on my side, would of course be accepted by me from them as of the most friendly and disinterested character.

“ My friend Sir Edward was away in the Pyrenees and I have always had a disinclination to ask advice of my own brothers—they are too much like myself and without the feminine *savoir faire*. So I resolved to consult Hawke and Shearer, our own family lawyers in Gray’s Inn—I always called them behind their backs Vulture and Scissors—they are very sharp people indeed. I told them the whole story about Mr. Bland just as I have told it to you. Of course, they said ‘it was a case of the most outrageous professional misconduct’ and that ‘Mr. B. ought to be struck off the rolls.’ I told them to take the necessary steps at once to get this done.

“‘O that was a different thing. It was very doubtful whether on my sole evidence so serious a step could be taken. Mr. Bland was a very deep old practitioner and was in a position to do me immense injury, and there was nothing in his letter referring to the interview with me. Besides I should only be advertising the imputation that had been made on my character!’

“Fancy my position, and my feelings! Here I was handcuffed and ironed by a lying scandal, and absolutely precluded from doing anything for my own protection. It was to me, who am accustomed to independence, a horrible situation.

“I found that Mr. Bland, with all his rascality, was as safe from punishment as the Queen or the Lord Chancellor. With great difficulty we got away the papers in the suit from these worthy ‘family solicitors.’ Bland, Bland and Smirke’s bill of costs was frightful, over a thousand pounds, and then my solicitors actually advised me not to tax the bill for the same reasons given for not taking action against their nefarious brethren! Thus I seemed to have found myself in the hands of a crew of swindlers, playing into each others’ hands. Bland said if we taxed the bill he would fight it and bring out all the ‘facts.’ Three months passed of incessant running, corresponding, swearing affidavits, serving notices, bills and documents of every description—before Hawke and Shearer could get the papers out of the other people’s hands and had begun to carry on the case from where it was left off. And now here I am at the end of two years, just where I was, being plundered every day by a legalised band of thieves, my right to the property as clear as the noonday, my innocence suspected, and my life made miserable. I would hand over all the money to-morrow to anybody who would relieve me from the position—but I am in it and must fight out of it. Now I want to ask you will you go into the case? You are the only outsider to whom I have told the whole story. You now see the rocks and shoals on every hand. I should have some confidence in winning my case within a reasonable time if you took it up. I know you are bold and fearless, and able—you can help me, if you will.”

Jobson, flattered and pleased by Miss Raymond's confidence, emphasised by a pair of deep, glowing eyes which looked beseechingly in his face, and enhanced by a smile that made her charming, as she watched feverishly for the reply, was dangerously tempted. He was sufficiently man of the world to feel that it was a perilous position in which the lady would place him. He was to take up her case as a confidential friend—as well as an advocate. Miss Raymond was obviously an impetuous young lady, and she was compromised by circumstances. She would naturally begin to lean on her confidant for sympathy, to be paid for by sentiment, as well as for opinions to be paid for in guineas. In Jobson's mind, however, such considerations—if for an instant they rose up before a mind accustomed to reflection—were swept away by the one fact that Miss Raymond, an innocent girl with no friends apparently to advise her, was in the toils of the law. She was the lady, in the invariable fable, tied to the tree, whom he, the gallant knight, was bound to ride in and rescue from the robbers, without considering the risk he ran of getting his head spilt open, or, more dangerous still, of her falling in love with him out of gratitude, and giving the gossiping world the materials for a fine scandal.

As they walked home from the Enge, Jobson had agreed to become junior in the great Armathwaite will case. For another year it dragged itself on, with motions for delay, adjournments, pleadings and repleadings. Yet Jobson had gone at it with superhuman force. Hawke and Shearer were disgusted with him. Instead of "making business," he did his best in every way to shorten and cheapen the process. He fought manfully and successfully against motions for adjournment, and brought all his skill and learning to bear to get the case advanced.

Result : the following conversation between Mr. Hawke and Mr. Snelling, his managing clerk. They are looking over the book of *agenda*, by which the attorney is able in the morning to smack his lips over the delicious *carte* of the day's profits to come.

"I thought I had told you to arrange a consultation with counsel in the Armathwaite will case to-day. Why have you not done it? This looks a very skimpy day."

"I saw Mr. Jobson's clerk about it, sir, to settle the hour ; and he has written to say Mr. Jobson does not see any necessity for a conference, he will undertake to settle the papers himself."

"D—— Mr. Jobson, sir ! I never heard of a more unprofessional proceeding ! Are two solicitors, sir, two Queen's Counsel, four juniors, two managing clerks, let alone counsels' clerks, sir, all to sit dangling their feet from their office stools, because Mr. Jobson forsooth is of opinion that a conference is unnecessary and the money can be saved out of such a splendid estate as Armathwaite's ? I say it is a most unprofessional proceeding, sir, and next time Mr. Jobson undertakes to interfere with our way of doing business, you will be good enough to tell him that your orders are peremptory. Here's fifty guineas, sir, at the very least, lost to the profession by Mr. Jobson's folly. Mr. Jobson be d——. I say. Where are the papers in the Lady Bowlitt's Charity case ? Make some business out of that. We will drop Mr. Jobson out of this case, sir, as soon as possible."

"I'm afraid you can't, sir," said the clerk with a grin. "Our client is a personal friend of Mr. Jobson's. I believe she has private consultations with him at his chambers. I certainly saw her one day coming out of the doorway at number Four Pump Court, Mr. Jobson's chambers, but I could get nothing out of his clerk, Mr. Timpany, who's as sharp as a weasel and as tight as a hogshead of port."

"Ah !" said Mr. Hawke. "That young lady is good-looking and, if Providence is good to her, there will still be a handsome thing out of this estate. But, sir, you ought to know Mr. Jobson is married and what you are saying, sir, is scandalous. Still she don't show up very well in the case, and it will be hard enough work as it is to pull her through ; but if she gets up another scandal with a junior counsel we're lost, Mr. Snelling."

The truth was that Miss Raymond never had entered Jobson's chambers. But one day, wishing to convey to him some confidential information in the case, she had carried it to Pump Court herself, and handed it in under an envelope to Mr. Timpany.

CHAPTER LV

AN EPISCOPAL THUNDERBOLT.

THE Dean of Coverley had asked Sir Arthur Jobson to visit him at the Deanery in September. Jobson and his wife and children were to go there from Scarborough.

Never did ecclesiastic settle down into a snugger, more charming nest than the Deanery of Coverley—and that is as much as to say that it was the perfection of comfort. For what class of human beings since the days when early Apostolic ways went out, and the new Christianity came in under Imperial patronage, has shown such adroitness in feathering its own nest as the clergy commonly called “Christian?” And our Dean was a most Christian clergyman.

Lying off the inmost point of the great Cathedral Close, where no right of way enabled profane radicals to disturb the precincts—hidden behind some huge elms, above which towered to the view, from the velvety bit of sward which was termed the lawn, stately parapets and the pointed arches and graceful mullions of the windows of the Lady-chapel, while further on you saw the great choir spread its wings in plummy rows of flying buttresses, and above the choir, rising towards heaven, the noble proportions of a grey square tower, with arched openings, and delicate stone traceries and fretted pinnacles and graceful finials—a marvel of architectural skill and celestial fancy,—the old-fashioned comfortable house, would have satisfied a poet’s dream of luxurious seclusion and sensuous beauty.

Part of the ancient stone wall that used to shut in the lawn and shrubbery from the Close, had been tastefully broken away, to allow of the substitution of a light iron railing, and a Gothic archway, with a centre for the carriage sweep, and two ports for the house and stable-yard paths.

Looking through the gate, you saw a picture : the low-cut hedge following the sweep of the drive on one side, while on the other various trees, some of great size and beauty, threw their protecting branches across the road. You could look over the hedge, and there, stretched away, gradually rising, for about two hundred yards, as green and soft a bit of turf as ever jewelled earth's lap. Into this, immediately in front of the house, were cut, with great taste, a number of beds of brilliant flowers ; and then across the broad sanded walk, on which, as on a terrace, stood a range of terracotta urns for plants, lay, with a fine deep-green background of trees, the large, long straggling house, part old grey stone—part old brick—part new brick—with its gables, its quaint oriels, with their slender ecclesiastical mullions, and its bay windows—its red-tiled roofs—the roses and ivies and coralled japonicas and graceful, star-like clematis and the bugled honeysuckle, all clinging round it with loving embraces. From the clean-stoned lintel of the gate to the well-oiled gilt vane at the top of the little turret which threw up its extinguisher-like roof at the further end of the group of buildings, the Deanery and its grounds gave proof of its wealth and taste and loving care and luxurious industry. Farther on, beyond the turret, just where the little lawn seemed to take a dip down towards a small copse, could be caught a glimpse of glass, well exposed for catching the sunlight, suggesting, not in vain, bloomy grapes, fragrant nectarines and peaches, and the rich foliage of tropical plants. The house was of considerable size. Its principal part dated back to the days of Henry IV. The refectory of a small priory, with its groined ceiling, was the dining-room of the modern Deanery, and a noble room it made. It was long, and low, and broad, and lit by three bay windows, two looking towards the Close, and one out over the lawn. The big dining-table, which when extended would seat thirty persons, hardly seemed to take up any room in it. You could walk freely all round it—or lounge in a dozen chairs opposite the great fireplace, with its ancient grotesque religious carvings. You could lie at full length on the soft low lounges in the roomy bays, two or three of you, and chatter piety or scandal without being

overheard by those who were seated about the room. This room was the centre of the life of the house. That end of it nearest the lawn-window was provided with inviting arm-chairs, and convenient little tables for work or books ; and against the wall in a pretty bookcase was quite a considerable library of light literature. It was here indeed that Mrs. Bromley loved to sit, and from here she ruled her little queendom. It was here that the Dean would come from the study and nurse his knee, and, looking out on the quiet beauty of the lawn, and the great belt of trees, and the grey glories of the apse of the Lady-chapel and the church tower of the Cathedral, would discuss family affairs with his wife. There were lots of other chambers—a charming suite of drawing-rooms, a pretty boudoir, a library with rich dark oak bookcases, and Turkey carpet, and all the other soothing, comfortable furniture needful for a luxurious Dean who was occasionally obliged to write original sermons—and did it well when he went at it ; but no place in the house seemed to all its inmates so homely as the great dining-room. I am afraid to say how many bedrooms there were in the Deanery. When the new Bishop was enthroned—or enthronised, which ought it to be?—Mrs. Bromley put up forty-one of the inferior clergy, and a lively time they had of it. That Sunday the butler reported that he opened thirty-five bottles of port, ten of sherry, and ten of old Madeira, not to mention the beer and cider that was drunk. But the Dean was generous and never gave it a second thought. The new Bishop was a High Churchman and a man after the Dean's own heart.

This autumn a very considerable party was gathering at the Deanery. Coverley is in a shooting county. Lord Radley's estate of Ringleton Hall, was within five miles of the Cathedral. Further out was Calton Towers, the charming residence of Sir Bellowby Pooks, Bart., M.P., who always had down a large party to shoot over his eight thousand acres. Two of the Dean's sons were at home with an eye to the said shootings. Lord and Lady Bratling were expected for a fortnight before they went off to the Continent, where, like sensible people, they invariably avoided the horrible winter of the British Isles—and the intolerable

melancholy of English society. Bertha Jobson, though she was not fond of the Dean or his wife, had promised to come, partly to watch events ; perhaps the more readily that her friend Winnistoun was to stay with Dr. Garwood, a Minor Canon, an old college friend of his, and the Dean's special aversion, for he dared to think for himself, objected to the Athanasian creed and other sacred things, and his ways were not the Dean's ways, nor were his thoughts the Dean's thoughts.

But the Dean was a gentleman. He belonged to an old school of men now dying out—one might almost say dead—who believed in manners. Dr. Bromley was not a handsome man, his tall forehead and grey hair and whiskers, and long straight nose of a genuine English type, and blue eyes, being rather marred by a large month, and not particularly good teeth. But he was close upon six feet in height, of a graceful, well-made figure : his bow was exquisite, his voice gently modulated, and the deference he always threw into his manner in society was the most subtle and perfect avoidance of fawning humility on the one hand or impudent assumption on the other which could have been reached even in the perfect schools of manners of the Renaissance or Louis Quatorze. The Dean's white whiskers and clean-shaved skin, and the blue eyes which looked so languishing and child-like from beneath his high, narrow, marble-like brow, rather suggested feebleness—or at least a certain simplicity : but it would have been a great error to count upon that. Touch the Dean's interest or his pride, or arouse him in regard to his religious beliefs, or cross him seriously in any way, and you found this gentle-looking gentleman had in him wonderful depths of power and passion. His letter to his son-in-law about the now famous *Quæstio Quæstionum* had been both bitter and heated.

When Jobson's mind had opened to religion it had found Churchmanship convenient to hand for a decent and attractive model of worship. But after the training he had had from Roger and his mother, it was not to be expected that he would feel himself bound to honour that beyond any other possible form of Christian churchmanship. His mind was naturally catholic and eclectic : and he had not the least difficulty in

the world in subjecting the Anglican Church to the same microscopic or other examination with all the other Churches of the world. It was not to him an object encased in a golden shrine of delicate filagree work, which ought not to be touched, still less handled. On the contrary—he treated it very much as if it had been an iron mace with which to break the Devil’s head, and he deliberately tested it all over to see whether it would do its duty in a rough battle. We all know that a good deal of scandal and weakness and wickedness lay under his eyes inlaid in this mighty weapon, strong and good as it was, and these Jobson did not hesitate to own and even to expose.

“Do you call yourself a good son of the Church?” the Dean had written him. “You who jibe her for those very differences within her which prove her catholicity—cavil at her greatest creed—ridicule the successors of the Apostles—scout that union with the State which is the result and the mark of her Divine authority.

Is it my lot, in my old age, to find my daughter wedded to a traitor to his country, his Church, and his God ! I speak in love—my dear son, you have deeply wounded me. You have vilified that Church which is the noblest, grandest expression upon the earth of Christian truth.” And so on. Jobson found that his mild-looking father-in-law, like most women and clerics, had at hand an incalculable amount of infuriated language. But he wrote back in a quiet, dignified style, acknowledging that he might have said some things which were not quite fair, but protesting that his conscience vindicated him from most of the Dean’s charges of pride, malice, and political bias. Dr. Bromley had answered—but not directly to Jobson. He had written a letter to his daughter intended to be read to her husband, full of benevolent sorrow mingled with bitter sarcasms—such as the favourite ecclesiastical one that a mouse was nibbling at the foundations of the mill. Then there had been other letters unseen by Jobson, between his wife and her mamma.

Lord and Lady Bratling, Sir Arthur Jobson, Bertha, the Dean and his wife were at breakfast in the great dining-room. They lounged in one by one, and sat long over the

pleasant meal at the handsome well-filled board. The scent of honeysuckle came in at the open windows. Everything suggested repose and enjoyment. A servant entered with a letter, and presented the same to Mrs. Bromley.

"From the Bishop," said the lady as she glanced at the seal. Her voice was a little manly and her manner also. She tore open the envelope with her forefinger *more suo*. A cloud passed over her brow.

"The Bishop *declines* to dine with us on Thursday," she said with dismay in her voice, and threw the letter with a gesture of anger and impatience across to the Dean, who had looked up suddenly and surprised. The Bishop had never refused to dine over that wine-cellar before.

Mrs. Bromley kept her mouth shut, and was looking at the breakfast-table with the air of a person who was waiting for a thunderclap. And it looked as if it were coming. The Dean's face grew pale as he glanced his eye over the rich, thick notepaper, of which three sides had been occupied by the episcopacy in refusing an invitation to dinner.

"In ordinary circumstances," it said, "my dear Mrs. Bromley, it would have given me, as you well know, the greatest pleasure to join the interesting party gathered under your roof: but your letter conveys an intimation which unhappily has obliged me to pause in hastening to accept your ever-delightful hospitality. It is very painful to write it to the mother of so admirable a woman as Sylvia Bromley, and the wife of so estimable a colleague and friend as my dear brother Bromley—but when you invite me to meet the author of that fearful book—the *Quæstio Quæstionum*, though he be the relative of those dearest to me in the bonds of Christ—I feel that, at the risk even of deeply wounding, as I know I shall, most friendly and worthy hearts, I must consider my duty to God and the Church of which I am a shepherd,—and the answer to the question I have been obliged to put to myself is emphatic—it is contained in the epistle to the Elect Lady, v. 10: *Εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ ταύτην τὴν διδαχὴν οὐ φέρει, μὴ λαμβάνετε αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ μὴ λέγετε*. This book is no ordinary disputation in a friendly spirit of doubtful theological points—it is

a diatribe—a bitter, relentless satire upon some of our holiest things. I sympathise deeply with my dear Dean and yourself in the sorrowful trial which has befallen you, and earnestly pray that the mercy of God may yet lead the profane and erring author of this malicious book to a sense of his wicked and melancholy error.”

The Dean's eyes darkened, his face flushed ; he was deeply agitated. Nothing could have given that strong man a more wounding blow than this apostolic epistle. He was expecting to receive at his house that very day the man who lay under the episcopal ban, who was pronounced a blasphemer ; and the sinner was his son-in-law, whose father sat beside him, quietly unconscious, at his own table. Dr. Bromley, begging to be excused, rose and left the room. A man of quick impressions, he felt unable to command himself. Mrs. Bromley remained, setting her lips, speaking drily and looking like an injured woman. The guests did their best not to notice her manner, but the jolly breakfast was as completely spoiled as if a bombshell had fallen in the middle of the table.

After breakfast the Dean returned and beckoned Sir Arthur Jobson into his library.

“You look ill,” said the Premier. “Has anything dreadful happened ?”

“My dear Sir Arthur,” he said nervously—he had forgotten to ask his guest to take a chair—“read that ! We are equally and sorrowfully interested in its contents.”

Sir Arthur was deliberate and methodical. He laid the paper down, put on his spectacles, slowly walked to the window—the library was a dark room—and read. He reperused the letter without sign of emotion.

“Who is your Bishop ?” he enquired coolly.

The Dean had been walking up and down the room with his hands behind him, anxiously expecting that Sir Arthur Jobson would break out with some angry exclamation on reading the fearful epistle—but no ! The Canadian Premier quietly folded it up, and asked again, in a tone which was enough to make the flesh of a Dean of Coverley creep :

“Who is this Bishop ?”

For a moment the Dean seemed hardly able to catch his

breath. He stared into Sir Arthur's quiet face with both his eyes dilated with astonishment.

"Dr. Godley—the former Canon of Christchurch whose name is a household word in the Church! My dear Sir Arthur—is it possible that even in a remote colony you have never heard of him?"

"Forgive me, I had forgotten at the moment who your Bishop was. Of course Dr. Godley's name has been familiar to me for years in newspapers and reviews. I had gathered that he was a wiser and a better man than this would seem to indicate."

We have said that the Dean was a gentleman.

He was under restraint.

He was also generous and *impressionable*—if the Critics will forgive me for using as the only word at hand—a word which ought not to exist. Sir Arthur Jobson's calmness acted upon him like cold air or chilly water on a fevered patient. He checked himself.

"You think the Bishop is wrong?"

"I think the Bishop is quite wrong, my dear Dean," replied Sir Arthur with decision. "Were all he apparently thinks—and all he has here said of my poor boy, exactly correct—he is still, in my poor judgment, acting most unwisely—I don't venture to say with a total absence of Christian charity, in placing a serious and earnest Churchman—I will vouch for him—beyond the pale of episcopal forgiveness. Why, sir, such a letter as this to a distinguished layman from any bishop in our Colonies, would ruin the bishop and the Church too. The laity would not stand such absurd bigotry out there, and the clergy know it."

"Ah!" replied the Dean, firing up a little. "I know there are grave irregularities in Church constitution and discipline in our Colonies. New and raw societies, I suppose, require some elasticity of treatment. But you must remember, Sir Arthur, that things are different here. You must recognise the fact that the power is given to the CHURCH: and the Bishop and the clergy are the CHURCH: your remark savours to me of libertinism."

"I know it savours of common-sense," answered Sir Arthur stoutly—"of which in this instance there appears to be a

conspicuous absence in your worthy bishop, if you will forgive me for saying so."

"Excuse me, Sir Arthur," replied the Dean, now with some heat, "I cannot forgive you for saying so. I cannot listen to language disparaging my bishop—here in my own house."

The Dean spoke hotly.

"Then, my dear Dean," replied Sir Arthur Jobson, "as I cannot abandon my opinions I had better leave the house."

The Dean saw he had committed a blunder. He threw off his anger in a moment and, with charming *naïveté* putting his white fingers over Sir Arthur's lips with a deprecating gesture, he cried out in a lively voice:

"—Two old men like you and I are not going to quarrel, Sir Arthur Jobson—even over a bishop and a naughty son. This affair is painful enough to us already, without extending its area. No—no—my dear, Sir," taking his arm. "Come out into the garden, and let us consult about the best plan of bringing round the good Bishop and your son and mine, to a more amicable frame of mind. The boy will be here this afternoon," said the Dean, his voice softening, "with Sylvia and the little ones. I would to God they might come to loving hearts and a happy home!"

"We shall have to remember," said Sir Arthur gravely, "that it is better to lead than drive, excepting perhaps with pigs and donkeys."

CHAPTER LVI.

JOBSON'S MOTHER-IN-LAW.

WHATEVER the conversation that passed between the two fathers in the garden, they came back together with somewhat sunnier faces than they had worn when they went out: but, in the dining room, Mrs. Bromley, looking stern and unhappy, brought back as it were by adumbration the shadow upon her husband's face. He instantly excused himself to Sir Arthur, and went to the library, whither she followed him.

"What are we to do?" she said with a tremor in her brave voice. "This is dreadful—it cuts me to the heart."

"And me," replied the Dean. "We have had a consultation, I should rather say a discussion about it—Sir Arthur and I—but it is very difficult to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. I admire the man very much. He is cool and just and very fond of his son, which perhaps affects his judgment. He thinks the Bishop is quite wrong."

"The Bishop wrong!" cried Mrs. Bromley. "Ridiculous! I think he is quite right."

She spoke now with firmness and resolution.

"What else could Dr. Godley say?" she pursued. "The book is an outrage on religion, and every Churchman must feel it to be so. You remember that passage about the political action of the Bishops in the House of Lords?"

"Yes, I remember it all, my dear Helen, too well. But, then, Sir Arthur Jobson says that that is a matter of political opinion and has little to do with belief. He urged that it was not dealing fairly with the young man to make him out an unbeliever. He has almost persuaded me that I have myself been too hard on Taddy. I should be very sorry to do anything which would even seem to tend towards driving him over to complete infidelity."

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Bromley severely. A man as clever as Thaddæus Jobson does not write a book like that without having well pondered it—and he must accept the consequences of it. Consider, my dear William, what an immense sale it has had, what an immense amount of mischief it has done! I have not had a happy moment since I read it, with the consciousness that *our* son-in-law was the author of such a production. It really seems to me the Bishop is quite right. The proper attitude to assume towards Thaddæus Jobson is to let him know distinctly that such sentiments as his cut him off from Christian communion until they are repented of."

"But, my dear," said the Dean, still under the influence of Sir Arthur's grave, common-sense arguments. "Don't you think we ought to try to get the Bishop to treat the case a little more leniently? I will go and see him and ask him if he cannot see his way to come and talk with poor Taddy. For Sylvia's sake we must act with caution and affection, and I am well-disposed, God knows, to the young man."

"Sylvia," said Mrs. Bromley, with a firm compression of the lips and a slight elevation of the nose and chin, "is too well trained to allow her judgment to be warped—like some people's apparently. She takes a *most sensible* view of it. She is, as you know, distressed beyond measure at her husband's perversity. And whatever suffering it may entail she will, I am certain, not desire us to humble ourselves—and compromise you—in the manner you propose. You will only get the Bishop's illwill and show your own weakness by what you propose to do."

The Dean was shaken as he was always sure to be if his wife took him in hand for half an hour on any question whatever, and he got up from the chair where he had been sitting very uncomfortably, and paced about the room.

"I am afraid," he said presently, "you are right"—a mode of concurring with his wife, which was scarcely complimentary, and which indicated the uncertainty in his mind. "Sir Arthur Jobson proposed himself to go and talk with the Bishop, and perhaps I had better let him do so."

"If Sir Arthur Jobson is willing to undertake to prove

the Bishop to be wrong to his own face, let him do it," said Mrs. Bromley, bringing her chin up strongly against the upper lip, as she laid one arm in another in an attitude favourite with her when she was emphatic. "I wish him well over his task. You would not like to try to do it, I am sure. But now you see Sylvia and *he* are coming to-day, and the house is full of people. It will be very disagreeable to us. You *must* speak to Mr. Jobson. Have you decided upon the line you are going to take? Of course it is impossible that things can go on on their present footing. If Thaddæus Jobson means to adhere to these opinions, it will scarcely be admissible for you with your position in the Church to let him stay at the Deanery."

The Dean was startled. He turned and looked at his wife with surprise and a touch of dismay in his face. But her face and manner were both very calm and determined.

"Refuse my house to my son-in-law!" cried the Dean, his natural goodness of heart speaking out for the moment, and all the harshness and cruelty of such a proceeding breaking in upon his mind.

"You would be obliged to do it if he had committed murder," said the lady decidedly.

"I don't know," replied the Dean shaking his head. "That would depend upon circumstances."

The lady went on as if she had not heard him. "What does the Bishop say?"

She pointed with her finger to the Greek text in the Bishop's letter which was lying open on the table.

The Dean scratched his head. I don't know why people when they are puzzled scratch their heads, except that in our modern dress no other part of the body is exposed to that agreeable relief. The process did not help Dr. Bromley. He walked about silent, his nature struggling against the terrible and inveterate logic of his wife. The struggle was a very hard one. Nothing could be more revolting to him than to order his own son-in-law out of his house. He felt he would rather brave much obloquy than do anything so unnatural. But, on the other hand, there were his two superior authorities—his wife and his Bishop—it was very doubtful which of the two was the more authoritative—and

they brought to bear upon him the higher sanction of sacred duty, to which, for more than a quarter of a century, he had been accustomed to yield without murmur or doubt. Mrs. Bromley did not interrupt him. She was quite sure of her ground, and equally certain of the way in which he would decide.

Presently, however, he came round to where she was sitting.

"Helen," he said solemnly, "I must think, and pray over this. May God give us the right direction! It is a fearful responsibility. I scarcely know how to meet it. Think of Taddy Jobson. What a fine manly fellow he is—and how he crept into all our hearts, and how proud we were of him. He is spirited and high-strung. His eternal welfare may depend upon our action this day. I cannot act hastily. Give me an hour alone to think about it."

There was almost a tear in the Dean's eye, and his wife's face softened a little.

"I agree with you thoroughly in that," she said, rising. "I will come in again at half-past twelve o'clock."

She kissed him, and went about her household affairs, while the Dean locked the door, and threw himself upon his knees, and groaned aloud with his face in his hands.

Surely this man should expect an answer from the Divine Oracle! Indeed it seemed to have come. There was a knock at the door—a note from the Bishop.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE FATHER AND THE BISHOP.

SIR ARTHUR JOBSON went from the Dean to Bertha. He related what had passed between them.

"Sister," he concluded, "in this country I seem to find myself carried back a century. How strange it is! Most advanced ideas come to us in the Colonies from English thinkers, and are there readily applied: but when one arrives here he find that society is a long way behind those whom we, in our distant review of the situation, imagine to be the leaders of opinion. Fancy Doctor Godley, who has written things which I esteem to be sound and true, taking such a line with Taddy, as generous and genuine a soul as ever lived. Imagine his father-in-law permitting his judgment to be warped—I cannot help thinking so—by such an outburst of episcopal petulance, honest no doubt, but intensely stupid."

"Unhappily, Arthur," said Bertha Jobson, "there are other influences at work against poor Taddy. I fear that Mrs. Bromley is not friendly—and, I ought to tell you Sylvia herself is prejudiced."

"His wife?"

"Yes. Before we left London she permitted herself to speak to me almost bitterly about him. I did not mean to tell you. Indeed I hardly felt justified in saying anything about what might only have been a temporary fit of anger. But since things are getting so serious, and we may have to act with some decision, you ought to know all the circumstances. It has lain very heavily on my mind. I hardly know what to expect from Sylvia's present temper."

She told him what had passed between her and Sylvia. He was deeply grieved. He reflected a few minutes.

"Taddy loves her," he said at length, "and she loves him.

This is a difference that may mend itself—if it is let alone. We must not interfere between them—we should only make things worse. But let us see what can be done to relieve the present strain here. Bertha, I shall go to the Bishop.”

“May God go with you! my dear brother,” said Bertha.

Sir Arthur Jobson had walked across the Close and, having passed through the finely-kept grounds of the Bishop’s mansion, and sent up his card, was now entering the library, to which the Bishop had at once directed that he should be ushered.

Doctor Godley of course guessed, as soon as he had glanced at the card, at the motive of the visit of the Canadian Premier. It was clearly on the subject of the episcopal letter of the morning, and the *vexata Quæstio Quæstionum*. Sir Arthur could hardly have come to thank him for declining to meet his son. It must be a visit of entreaty or reproach, and the Bishop felt that he would be stronger for the conflict with temptation or attack, were he to meet him on his own ground, surrounded by his books, and the memories of the chamber consecrated to his most serious personal struggles with the influences of evil. Indeed, at the moment when Sir Arthur was announced, Dr. Godley was in the act of putting upon paper some reflections, that had been suggested to him by his morning’s work—on “Christ’s hostility to Unbelief.” The father therefore found the ecclesiastic as it were armed, and exercising in the full panoply of the Church militant.

The Bishop was a fine man, with a large head, large hands and feet, a great face, a massive brow, hard, stiff hair, adding in its picturesque unrestraint of growth and arrangement, to the forcible impression conveyed by his other features. Out from under his grizzly brows peered two keen, penetrating dark eyes. There were deep wrinkles in the swarthy skin, and strong lines across the brow which had a habit of knitting itself whenever the Bishop was thinking or feeling very deeply.

Every way, we say, he was a big man and stout, as could be seen when he rose, and displayed his powerful limbs clothed in the episcopal gaiters. He had risen before Sir

Arthur entered, and as the Premier came forward with great deliberation, Dr. Godley having taken in the advancing face and figure with a quick sharp glance, as if to measure his man, bowed very courteously, and, taking his visitor's hand, placed him in a seat near the great table covered with books, pamphlets, and papers, all in the perfect order which indicates the man of business and of organisation.

"Sir Arthur Jobson," he said while he continued to study his visitor, "your name has long been familiar to me, though I have never had the pleasure of meeting you before. You are staying with my good friend the Dean?"

"Yes, my lord," replied Sir Arthur, speaking with great calmness and slowness, but going straight to his subject. "And you must already have guessed the object of my visit."

"Hem!" said the Bishop, a little nonplussed by Sir Arthur's simple tactics—as a good Christian moved to tell the truth, and as a man of the world not feeling it to be quite tactical to be too candid—"Well—Sir Arthur—possibly—I may have an idea—of course I imagine that you may have wished to present yourself to me, alone and at an unusual hour, on some matter of extreme gravity, and the only one that occurs to me as likely to have given rise to your visit, is the unhappy position of your son."

"I imagined that it would be unnecessary for me to open with any explanation," replied Sir Arthur simply. "This morning, Doctor Godley, you have taken a step of the gravest consequence to my son's happiness and perhaps to his eternal welfare—so grave indeed that, knowing from your writings, with which I am thoroughly familiar, how true and able an expounder and defender you are of Christian ethics, it fills me with the deepest sorrow and dismay."

"I can sympathise with you, my dear sir," said the Bishop, softening his voice as he crossed one leg over the knee of the other, and gazed with a gentle eye at the point of his great shoe. "I can sympathise with you as a father and a Churchman. It is indeed a lamentable thing that anyone in the responsible position of your son should have allowed himself to pen such a diatribe against the faith and the Church which we alike love and respect."

"You of course have read the book?" inquired Sir Arthur, with that simple unconsciousness of the injurious reflection conveyed by his question, which is often to be found in honest and direct men even of some acuteness of intellect.

The Bishop bowed, offended.

"Do you really think then, Doctor Godley, that, in its intent and effect, it is a book which you as a powerful polemical writer ought to characterise in such terms? Is it possible that my son deserves to be treated as an infidel for exposing those errors and weaknesses which it is the first duty of the clergy to endeavour to remedy?"

"In its intent and effect," said the Bishop in a strong voice, "the book, Sir Arthur Jobson, is perfectly diabolical. It is painful to say so, and to you, but I have already written it, and I may as well speak plainly. You, sir, if I am not mistaken, are a sufficiently good Churchman to know that it is not by the conduct of individuals, or by occasional errors of action, that the claims of the Church to have authority over the consciences of men, are to be measured. It is the Church as a whole—the Church historical—the Church universal—the Church militant—the Church triumphant over the evil which is in the world—to which your and my allegiance is given and is due. As a great human instrument it is undoubtedly full of imperfections—but it is an instrument of Divine inspiration and purpose. Every true believer recognises its absolute Divine authority—reverences it as the symbol and instrument of that authority. To revile the Church is to revile God. To satirise and hold up to scorn her Clergy, her works, her constitution, ay, and her dogmas, indicates the spirit of the iconoclast. For God himself is not safe—with reverence be it spoken—from the arrows of the wicked, if the Church, His own exponent upon earth, is to be the butt of the shafts of profane ridicule and sarcasm."

"Forgive me, my Lord Bishop," said Sir Arthur, mildly, "if I cannot quite take for granted all that is implied in what you have said, I am a simple layman, but I have read and thought with great freedom upon the topics suggested by your words. All that you have written on

this and kindred subjects, I have read with admiration and much profit—if not always able to subscribe to every one of your positions. I think I may claim honestly to be a true and sincere Churchman, loving the Church for her own sake, and anxious for her welfare. But, forgive me if I seem to be dissenting from so high an authority—I am not prepared to say that she is otherwise than a human institution, deriving her authority not from a Divine patent, but from her inherent power of attracting and using in the most efficient way and on the most correct principles all the possibilities of good which a good God has laid to our hands. As such an institution she is to my mind as open as all other institutions to discussion and criticism. and, although my son may not have selected the most agreeable or the most fair, or even the most legitimate way of bringing his really extraordinary abilities to bear upon the means of her improvement I cannot for a moment agree with you that he is not perfectly within his right as a layman and a Christian, to handle abuses in the Church even with an unsparing hand."

The Bishop smiled. He foresaw now that he should have no trouble in routing his antagonist. Had Sir Arthur agreed with him as to the functions of the Church, and appealed to him on the ground of mercy to an erring son, the worthy ecclesiastic was conscious that he had a soft place in his heart, which might be vulnerable to persuasion or appeal, though he could hold it against assault. But when Sir Arthur's first parallel indicated on his part principles utterly at variance with the Bishop's dearest opinions, he was able at once to brace himself up to resistance, and knew already that the victory was won.

"Ah!" he said, bringing the tips of his white fingers together, "I see, Sir Arthur Jobson, that we are fundamentally disagreed on deep and important principles. It is obviously useless to enter now on a discussion which has been developing for centuries and is to-day as keen and bitter as ever. For the present let us dismiss that and come to the immediate object of your visit."

He paused and looked inquiringly at Sir Arthur Jobson.

"My object, my Lord Bishop, in coming to you—

perhaps I ought to say intruding on you"—the Bishop bowed a courteous deprecation—"was, as you may have foreseen, to entreat you to reconsider the very serious step you have taken in regard to my son's presence at the Dean's. You cannot tell how deeply it has wounded the feelings of your friends the Bromleys to find themselves, by your action, forced as it were to choose between their episcopal superior and highly-valued friend—and a member of their own family."

"That is hardly a fair way of putting it," said the Bishop kindly. "I do not wish in the remotest way to lay any restraint on the family relations of my dear friend the Dean. My action is inspired, as you may believe, my dear sir, by a sense of duty. I should be deeply pained if in any way it tended to produce unhappy relations in the family circle."

"How could it do otherwise, my lord?" inquired Sir Arthur, his habitual directness again making him candidly unpleasant. "It could hardly be possible that the Dean should receive your letter without being greatly exercised by it. If my son is unfit for association with you, he is unfit to associate with his father-in-law, who is under you in the Church. He interposes, while he remains at the Deanery, a barrier between you and your free intercourse with the Dean's family. To the Dean and his wife that is more than painful. It obliges them to consider whether they ought to keep up the close intercourse with their son-in-law which nature and affection alike prompt them to. I assure you, my dear Lord Bishop, all these questions are raised by your resolution. Is it really needful to vindicate your position at such a cost?"

"At any cost, Sir Arthur," said the Bishop decidedly. "I say it with the deepest pain, Sir Arthur Jobson. I will not meet this young man on the footing of friendship, and in no other way can I meet him at the Deanery. You must see yourself how impossible it would be."

"But, forgive me, Bishop, what I do *not* see is the necessity for this harshness! Are you aware that my son has been for years a sincere and devoted Christian? I am persuaded he remains so to-day. What good can you do him by this sort of excommunication? Even if he has committed

an error, is this the way to bring him to see his fault and amend it?"

"You are catechising me," said the Bishop with an attempt at a smile on his flushed face, as he drew himself up with a dignified air.

"No," said Sir Arthur Jobson firmly. "I am speaking to you as a father and a Bishop in the Church, responsible to God for your actions, and I simply wish to remind you that your present determination may have consequences to the happiness of a family you esteem—and even, I may tell you—ulterior consequences—of a very painful and injurious character: and I am appealing to you to consider whether there is no other line of action which you might conscientiously adopt, that would avoid those consequences. I hardly dare to hint to you what may be the possible outcome of your letter, if you abide by its contents."

Sir Arthur, speaking with the earnestness of anxiety and with the dignity usual to him, was so strong that for a moment Dr. Godley felt himself to be overborne. But he gallantly rallied: he was a little angry.

"And, my dear sir, with all respect, I cannot admit your right to subject me to this examination. It may be taken for granted that I have not adopted my resolution without duly weighing all the considerations you have so frankly urged. But the responsibility for the consequences at which you hint, must rest with the originator of the difficulty—and with those who abet him. I cannot undertake to relieve him from those consequences at the expense of my own consistency."

Sir Arthur Jobson bit his lip to keep himself from speaking. The Bishop's keen eye must have seen in his face what he would have said had he spoken. Something had occurred to the statesman's mind about the spirit of the Great Shepherd from whom the Bishop professed to derive his authority. But he rose and said:

"I have no right, my lord, if I had the inclination, to dispute with you your determination in a matter entirely within your own conscience. I have done all I feel I am entitled to do in hinting at the serious responsibilities involved in your resolution. I would entreat you still to

consider the matter—or, at least, if you can do so, communicate to the Dean, who has been deeply moved by your language, that you do not wish him to feel that, even by implication, you would approve of his treating my son with unnecessary harshness. My boy is strong and proud, and I tremble at the prospect which is before us, if the Dean retains the impressions of duty conveyed by your letter, under which he was labouring when I left him an hour or two ago.”

“Sir Arthur Jobson,” said the Bishop, with kindness in his tones, “though we may differ in opinion, this interview, I can assure you, has proved how justly you bear the reputation of a candid, able, and high-minded man. I will see the Dean, certainly, and advise with him. In any case I am gratified to have made the acquaintance of one so distinguished, and I hope that circumstances may so shape themselves that we may be able to enjoy an intercourse unalloyed with painful and disturbing considerations. Good-bye !”

This seemed eminently friendly and appreciative, but it was not satisfactory.

As soon as Sir Arthur had taken leave, the Bishop sat down and penned a note to the Dean :

MY DEAR BROMLEY

Come over and see me.

Ever yours

S. CORV.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE AIR THICKENS.

THADDÆUS JOBSON and his wife had never returned to the subject which had been mooted on that memorable morning at the breakfast-table. Jobson loved his wife and wished to forget the startling and painful effect produced by her words. He esteemed her sense very highly. She was a clever woman of the world and of business. No house could be better directed than hers, no society duties could have been better performed than by her, no more sensible adviser in most current affairs could have been selected by any man ambitious to take a place in the world. In all these things she was perfect. But then she had too much *common-sense* to be a good lover. It was impossible for her to avoid estimating, by practical rules, things not to be estimated in that way. Jobson on the contrary had a fine imagination and a keen intuition. Not that he acted from mere impulse when he did or said things which, tested by the prudential considerations of the moment, seemed to be ill-advised, but from a prophetic estimate of far-off results—that prophetic estimate which is the inspiration of genius. Mrs. Jobson would have measured an Angel's flight with a shoemaker's rule—Jobson by the length and strength of the wings. Conscious of this difference between their characters and temperaments, he had hitherto found in the gentle intercourse of their home, that the diversity rather lent a charm and variety to their life. In those first years, when the affections are fresh, and the thoughts young and green, and the morning glow of paternal and maternal joy softens the air which surrounds the happy couple, and makes a perpetual climate of sunny life, all is spring and hope and promise: the very thorns turn away their points, and the thistles and the nettles

brush the skin without a sting. Still the nettles and the thistles and the thorns are there—and the first time they make their presence felt they wound with torturing effect. Jobson's wife had suddenly developed a state of mind which filled her husband with alarm. He knew himself; his proud, strong nature could not be trusted to endure unmoved his wife's scorn or reproach. And if they did not see eye to eye they were neither of them people to affect to do so. For this reason they both shrank from admitting that they did not even to their own hearts. Hence Jobson, suppressing to the utmost the disagreeable thoughts that strove for form in his mind, was as kind as ever in his manner to his wife, who, for her part, felt unequal to the task of raising the issue again, and bringing it to a crisis. Meantime, she opened her heart to outsiders—outsiders to the sacred intimacy of husband and wife, although so near to her as a father, a mother, or a sister-in-law. Thus, in effect, Jobson was not only face to face with his wife, but with a group of persons of different ideas and sentiments, and yet, like a blinded sitter in a spiritualist *séance*, he did not know with whom he was contending.

This was the state of things when the two arrived at the Deanery at about three o'clock in the afternoon of the day which had already been so full of incidents momentous in Jobson's fate.

It was very pretty to see the carriage, driven by old Marksby the coachman, who remembered carrying the young wife as a girl on his shoulders in the stable-yard, nearly thirty years ago, his face radiant with pleasure, roll in under the archway and along the smooth white drive, Jobson and his wife and their children shaking their handkerchiefs in response to quite a multitude of similar signals from the lawn, where the Dean and his lady and all the visitors were collected, and the house windows out of which the natty maid-servants looked with jolly faces. No one would have thought, as the Dean seized Jobson's hand and passed it on to Sir Arthur, and Sylvia was folded in her mother's arms, while little Etta jumped into those of Aunt Bertha, what incongruous feelings were aching at the core of many of the hearts in that company. It was a

moment of effusion—only a moment ; for when the flutter was over, and they came to look into each other's faces, a slight chill seemed to strike into the group. There was a consciousness that draughts were about. Everybody immediately made a violent effort to shake off the feeling, and that could only be done by motion. Exit Mamma and Sylvia, talking about the children's ills and Sylvia's health. Jobson went off with his father and Aunt Bertha, the Dean quite comfortable about it, because it had been honourably arranged that nothing was to be said to Jobson about the matters in agitation, except after further consideration. Everything indeed seemed to have been most perfectly managed. The Bishop while speaking in very frank terms to Dr. Bromley, about his views of Jobson's condition spiritual and mental, had advised his friend to act with temperance and discretion ; and the good Dean really felt happy that he could receive his son-in-law in his home without flouting his Bishop. Lord and Lady Bratling and Miss Raymond, unaware of the thunder-clouds which had been gathering in their immediate neighbourhood, were able to feel that amiable sympathy with a family joy, which is akin to the feeling evoked by an interesting picture or a pretty arrangement of flowers.

One thing, however, had not been provided against. The Dean had not considered that Mrs. Bromley and Mrs. Thaddæus Jobson were certain to exchange confidences. The truth was Mrs. Bromley did not divulge all her correspondence to the Dean. It was large and varied. Much of it he would rather not have been troubled with—and even his daughter's letters to her mother only interested him in so far as they conveyed interesting accounts of her health and assurances of her well-being. He did not know how freely she had written to her mother about Jobson and her relations to him. It did not much matter, for Mrs. Bromley was not the woman to bind herself to be silent on any topic to such a daughter.

Tea was served on the lawn : afternoon tea was even then a fashion with lazy people of incredible digestions. Mrs. Bromley was there, and all the Jobsons, but Sylvia was excused by the Dean's wife, who had passed an hour alone

with her daughter and reported her somewhat fatigued. The Dean was sipping his tea and chatting brightly with Miss Raymond! Bertha, Lord Bratling, and Jobson formed another group, while Lady Bratling conversed with Sir Arthur.

"Why!" cried Bertha suddenly—she was facing the gate—"there is Mr. Winnistoun. How nice! Who is that with him?"

The Dean looked over his shoulder. Advancing with Winnistoun was a middle-sized, pale-faced man with spectacles. It was Canon Garwood.

"Canon Garwood," said the Dean. He looked at Mrs. Bromley and Mrs. Bromley looked at him.

Taddy Jobson rose. "This is my friend Winnistoun, Mamma Bromley," he said, in an undertone as he walked out to meet the two visitors. "He is staying with Canon Garwood."

In a few minutes the gentlemen had been presented and had taken their seats in the circle.

Canon Garwood had keen eyes under his spectacles, and a thoughtful brow above them. His face was narrow and long; the chin indicated force, and the thin, compressed lips firmness, and yet his face was not disagreeable. There was no beauty in it—but there were intellect and sympathy. He was clever beyond question—the Dean was obliged to own that. His intellect was hard and acute—and very direct. Hence with all his sympathy, he had a knack of going at subjects which were untimely, as most students do who have not been thoroughly trained in society, and have been accustomed to follow freely the bent of their thoughts.

"I am delighted to meet you, Mr. Jobson," he said, addressing our hero, "and to congratulate you on the success of your last book. It is wonderfully clever and amusing and will do great good."

The Dean started and threw a glance from under his flushed brow at the unconscious Canon. Mrs. Bromley drew her lips together and bridled as she looked at the Dean. Bertha looked down with a curious smile in the corners of her mouth which Winnistoun caught, and then

with the rapidity of lightning throwing his glance around upon the group, he gathered that the topic was displeasing. Sir Arthur looked a little nervously towards the Dean. Winnistoun was about to say something as far off from the subject as possible, when Lord Bratling, whose diplomatic career had not tended to make him by any means a bigoted pietist, struck in.

"Admirable!" he said. "My dear Jobson, I meant to congratulate you upon it the moment I saw you. Lady Bratling and I have been ever so much amused by the book—do you know, it is the very cleverest thing that has been done for a long time—saving your presence, Dean," he added, with a mock bow, a little malicious, in the direction of that dignitary.

Now, if the Dean had been Mrs. Bromley or Mrs. Bromley the Dean, that personage would at that moment have broken out with a very emphatic disclaimer of the hateful book. *The* actual Dean was conscious Mrs. Bromley was regarding him with a stern eye, expecting that he would manfully do his duty. But there was the compact with Sir Arthur—the Bishop's counsel—the inappropriateness of raising a family quarrel in the presence of so many outsiders: in fact the Dean was not equal to the occasion; he was altogether too good for it. So, with a nervous side-glance at Mrs. Bromley, he said:

"It has certainly had a success—if the number of editions is a measure of success. But you must not expect me to join you in your applause of it, Bratling. I know you diplomats are very wicked people, and I daresay you take a pleasure in seeing the clergy wiggled. Come to the conservatory, Miss Raymond, I will get you some flowers for your hair."

—And he strolled off with the young lady, leaving Mrs. Bromley with feelings that were so deep as for a long time to be inexpressible. Sir Arthur hastily introduced another topic—upon which Winnistoun and Bertha exchanged glances. He was now assured that something was wrong. He asked her to show him the grounds.

They walked along quietly till they were out of hearing. These two people understood each other so perfectly that there was little need for prolonged explanations.

"There is something serious the matter," he said suddenly turning to her, "concerning that book of Jobson's."

"You are a perfect Mephistopheles," she replied smiling. And, the ice thus broken, she told him all she knew. While he listened his sagacious brow was knitted and his grey eyes sparkled. Winnistoun was as deep and true a Christian as ever lived, but his immense intelligence and human sympathies could no more have been confined within the area of any single church than the rain of heaven could be shut up in a tea-kettle.

"*Mon Dieu !*" he said. "How strange! I have been talking to Garwood only this morning about the Bishop, and the Dean, and their narrow theology—narrow, if honest: and when Garwood told me that the Bishop had written a violent review of Taddy's book for *The Guardian*, I laughed and said what fun it would be to see them together! But," he said smiling, "what an odd fellow Garwood is! He goes on thinking aloud in any company without regard to the fitness of things! If I did not know him *au fond* I should have suspected him of some malice in touching upon the book, in that company. I could see that he had dropped a fire-cracker into Mrs. Bromley's tea-cup, and the Dean's pocket—but, this is far too serious for laughter," he said suddenly checking himself.

"Indeed—indeed, my dear friend," said Bertha. "It is so serious that I hardly know what to expect. There is more behind which I cannot tell you, without Taddy's leave—something indeed which poor Taddy himself does not know as yet, but more painful than all the rest put together. You will not feel that I am wanting in trustfulness if I cannot at present put you in possession of it?"

"I believe in you implicitly," replied Winnistoun, looking at her with beaming eyes. "My faith in your goodness and your discretion never wavers."

She gave him a grateful look, without a trace of coquetry or affectation. They had passed long since beyond the turbid currents of sentiment into the repose of unruffled friendship.

"Can nothing be done?" he inquired, with his natural eagerness to help to right all that was wrong around him.

"Not now," said Bertha. "When you can do any good I will give you a sign."

CHAPTER LIX.

A CYCLONE.

WHEN Jobson entered the great, comfortably-furnished, cheerful bedroom, over the dining-room, to dress for dinner, he found his wife sitting opposite the cheval glass, with her hair down over her shoulders, weeping bitterly. The effect of a weeping woman on different minds is very various. Men of susceptible natures are very much moved by it, and feel the deepest anguish. Others of a brutal temperament are hardened and enraged. But on natures equally refined and strong the effect is not seldom peculiar. Then, instead of moving to sympathy, tears excite contempt. Strong minds love self-control, and tears are the signs of weakness and a general looseness of the organisation. The sympathy felt by such natures for one who weeps from the anguish of pain or sorrow, is real and deep; but after a certain time comes a revulsion. Refined sensibilities resent a pain too long inflicted, especially when conscious that they themselves can by a struggle suppress emotions which are disagreeable to others. And Jobson, who had trained himself to that exquisite courtesy which permits no weakness of one's own to annoy one's fellows, always felt a certain contempt for tears. They were the last things with which to move him except in those clear moments of agony and sorrow which break down all hearts, and, overflowing every barrier, make all souls swim together for life in common sympathy.

He was unconscious of any motive for his wife's passionate grief—a grief most unusual to this strong-minded woman; and the first impression produced upon him was one of painful surprise.

"Are you ill, dearest?" he cried out, striding over to her, and laying his hand on her uncovered shoulder. It was

that loving touch which thrills through every fibre of two beings, if their hearts are one. But Sylvia, as she felt it, shivered, and even made a slight movement to withdraw from the contact.

While she had been weeping she had been thinking, fast and strongly. The suppressed fountains of weeks of feeling were breaking out in those angry torrents.

There was a rush of blood to Jobson's heart, as he felt the repulse : but he did not remove his hand.

"Nay, Sylvia—tell me—what is it?"

"I am miserable," she sobbed out.

With a rapid intuition he connected her grief with the painful topic of that regretted passage of arms and the interview with her mother.

Still his heart clung to her. He took the hand which lay upon her lap. There was no response to his loving pressure.

"What can have happened, dearest, to make you so unhappy? Has your mother been telling you any bad news?"

"Yes."

Her grief became painful. It redoubled.

Pressing her head against his bosom, Jobson held her there for a minute or so, until the paroxysm was relieved. Profound as were his suspicions of the cause of her strange sorrow, he could not frame any explanation of it.

"I will go and ask your mother what it is," he said at last, since his wife did not speak.

"You need not—the Bishop declines to visit the Deanery while you are here, because of your book. He thinks you worse than an atheist. I knew how it would be. It is too dreadful!"

"Is that all?" said Jobson, dropping his wife's hand, removing his own from her shoulder, and standing opposite her, a pace or two off. He was at first inclined to laugh, but a terrible anger rose in his face and eyes. She happened to glance up at him at the moment and saw it. It made her flesh creep. She had never seen him look like that.

"Is that what you are crying for?" he said, in a low, trembling, passionate tone. Those words "*I knew how it*

would be," had revealed to him more than all the rest. It was no mere regret at the Bishop's harshness which was wounding her soul. Anger, reproach against him—her husband—lay deep down below the thought, and prompted the words. All that he had been retaining for weeks now seemed to rush through him with a passionate energy—the confined, unadmitted sense of wrong, of injury, of her selfish anger, of her weakened affection. It was really to Jobson a more dreadful blow than if she had been grossly faithless to her marriage vows ; because it was something more holy and ideal, than those, which was suddenly swept away by this revelation—the sacred unity which he cherished as his ideal of a perfect love. That other fault a great loving heart might possibly have forgiven—as a great God would have done : but this was the breaking of the golden link which united their affections, and there was no art or skilful workman that could mend the broken chain !

There is something dreadful in the silent passion of a powerful, intellectual, self-controlled man. At the glance which Sylvia took in she trembled and averted her eyes.

Jobson turned on his heel and went to the window. He stood there a few minutes, thinking as he looked out into the sunny air and sky. She did not move—she hardly dared to breathe. She was expecting a storm. Directly, however, he turned again into the room, his face calm and serene, but pale. He dressed himself, moving about as if she were not in the room. He neither looked at her nor spoke. As soon as he was ready he went down to the drawing-room, leaving her there. No one could have accused her of want of courage, but not for the world would she have opened her lips to that pale, dread, silent figure.

Her tears were dried. She had been moving about, quietly preparing herself, and meanwhile thinking. Jobson's terrible, unuttered scorn had cut her to the quick, but it had not conquered her spirit. She began to feel indignant. A proud woman, the sense of his superiority, which had come over her while he was there, choked her and made her writhe with mortification. However when the bell rang for dinner, she descended to the drawing-room with a face calm and stern. Jobson was laughing and talking with Miss

Raymond as if nothing were the matter. Sylvia looked, and felt that she hated this woman.

Bertha's nature was one, as we have seen, which like a barometer instantly felt the influence of changes of temperature in her neighbourhood. To-day she examined her nephew with even more than usual anxiety, and, beneath the marble-like steadiness of his features, she quickly divined that a storm was raging. A glance at Sylvia when she came in confirmed the suspicion. Throughout the evening Jobson never approached or addressed his wife. When the ladies withdrew, Mrs. Bromley and Sylvia had a few words in the *boudoir*, and after the good-nights had been said, Bertha noted that the mother and daughter moved towards the maternal rooms together.

It was late when Taddy Jobson entered his chamber. He found his wife sitting-up and dressed, the lamp lit, an air of resolution in her manner which he at once appreciated. He looked at her steadily. Each was clearly conscious that a supreme moment had come. In another room, on her knees, Bertha, trembling, prayed with all her soul that the good God would keep her Taddy from all perils. But if the good God were to interfere to stop all matrimonial quarrels the other affairs of the universe would be sadly neglected.

"Sitting up still?" said Jobson with an affectation of surprise.

"Yes. I have been waiting for you : are you going to speak to me?"

"I have nothing to say," replied Jobson. "It is better not to say anything. You have wounded me deeply. I cannot trust myself to speak."

"I don't know what you mean."

On neither side was there an endearing word or thought.

"Then," said Jobson, "you have less intelligence than I gave you credit for. I have discovered this afternoon that you cannot truly love me. Your words imply it, because they prove that you do not even respect me. The spirit and the feeling which you are now showing, which you have been entertaining for weeks, are wholly inconsistent with the

harmony of a perfect union—an ideal," said Jobson with bitterness in his voice. "which, knowing the world as I do, I was nevertheless fool enough to cherish."

"I don't know or care anything about ideals," said Mrs. Thaddæus, cleverly. "I believe in good, practical common-sense. If you had had more of that and less of your ideals, we should not be in the painful and ridiculous position we now occupy."

Jobson raised his eyebrows. His wife had rallied and was now the attacking party.

"What is there that is so 'painful' and 'ridiculous' in our position?" he said.

"What is there? Why everything. You, a clever man, are making yourself a worry to your friends and a laughing-stock to the world. You disregard the advice and warnings of your best advisers—you play into the hands of your enemies—you neglect the interests of your wife and children in running after your 'ideals'—and now I come home here to find my father and mother grieved and annoyed beyond measure by the natural consequences of your actions. Imagine a Bishop of Coverley refusing to enter the Deanery, because it harbours someone whom he regards as worse than an infidel——"

Mrs. Jobson was going on—her pent-up anger had broken loose and the torrent was rapid and rude.

"Stop!" said Jobson in his deepest voice. "Stop, if you have any regard for yourself and your children—and me. I will not listen to these words even from my wife, and they are words which once spoken cannot be burned out of the memory. They only assure me that my suspicions were correct. If you had truly loved me you could never have uttered them."

If Sivia at that moment had broken down—had said anything to indicate that her language was merely an outburst of temporary anger, perhaps his heart would have softened. But she had resolved upon her course. For the moment consequences were secondary in her mind to the necessity of "taking a stand"—words which her mother had used in the private conference held between them an hour before. Her mind was in that state of excited egoism which

dismisses for the time all other considerations than the vindication of personality.

"I don't care what you think!" she said, in real anger. "You cannot undo what you have done—and I *will* say what I think of it. If you have any self-respect, any esteem for those who are dearest to me—you will not leave them in the situation in which you have placed them. You have no right to stay in a house where your presence brings unhappiness and injury."

The words were spoken, coming out of the woman's mouth and heart, as if they had been drawn forth like a skein by Fate. There are curious frames of mind wherein thought and words seem to come by inspiration, from whatever source, looking back on which, the thinker and speaker finds it impossible to explain how he ever came to give them place or form in the mind. The words had barely rushed out of Sylvia's mouth before she was sorry for them.

"Very well," said Jobson sternly.

His blue eyes seemed as dark as ebony in the lamp-light, and glowed with a remarkable brightness. His face was as calm as that of a marble sphinx. Within him sorrow and anger were contending together for expression, but ended in neutralising each other's power. He paced the room a moment, forcing himself, by a terrible effort, to be silent, and then, without looking at his wife, he left the room.

For the moment Sylvia's pride kept her seated, and the consciousness of her own rectitude made her indifferent to whatever might happen. She believed that he was too proud a man to do anything which would compromise his dignity or hers. Not looking very far before her, she cherished an idea that, after a struggle of a few days, things would arrange themselves on some footing which would be more satisfactory to her egoism.

Meanwhile he was pacing the garden alone, his hat off, the cool evening air bathing his brow, his eyes watching the great silent heaven above him, the most magnificent symbol of repose. For the moment he felt stunned, and his mind found relief in stopping all reflection, and merely absorbing the calmness and rest of that infinite prospect. Then came a rush of thoughts, and he began to frame to himself his

course. He shrank from consulting his father, or aunt, or Winnistoun. He felt sure that it was impossible for him to remain in his father-in-law's house, and the only question was how to leave it without creating a scandal. And then the query distinctly formulated came before him :

"What is to be done about Sylvia?"

Perhaps he was not conscious of the extent of the resentment he felt against her—perhaps he was unwilling to own it to himself. So deeply had she wounded him that, for the time, he felt that he could hardly endure her companionship. But, on the other hand, he must guard against any action that might be injurious to her wifely good-name, or to his own dignity. Therefore he determined that he would struggle to suppress his feelings. But she ought to be made to recognise the fact that their fates were bound together. If he were required to leave her father's house, she must leave also ; that he resolved was needful, come what might. She would have to choose between him and her own people. It was a terrible trial, but not of his raising. These were the definite results of his long hours of watching and walking—he would relieve the Dean of his presence, and his wife must elect to stay or go.

If she stayed?

Jobson turned his mind away from the question : it was not to be considered.

The dawn came, and the morning, and the gardeners, and the opening windows, and the sunrays darting about the house as they pierced the foliage of the trees. The men wondered at his pale face and evening dress, but he let them wonder, and did not go in. He knew that soon after sunrise the Dean would be out.—There he was, stepping from the dining-room, the fat poodle waddling at his heels. He started as he saw Jobson standing before him, haggard, pale and stern, and still in his evening dress.

"Why, Jobson !" he cried, "what does this mean? Have you been spending the night with Winnistoun?"

"No, Doctor—but here, in your garden. I learned from Sylvia last night that my presence inside the Deanery is a source of grief and vexation to you and to Mrs. Bromley—

and most of all to your Bishop. I could not sleep, and I have been walking about determining my course. It is clear. I and mine had better relieve you at once of our presence. Sylvia and I will go away."

"Why, dear me! Taddy Jobson," said the Dean, blushing all over, "what do you mean? This is really very foolish of Sylvia—very unwise of Mrs. Bromley—to moot the subject to you so prematurely! No—no—the Bishop certainly has been a little stern, but I had hoped we should have found a *modum vivendi*. We can't think of quarrelling with you, my dear son, because we don't agree in opinions—at least," said the Dean, opposite ideas ludicrously struggling together in his mind as he thought of Mrs. Bromley—"at least—I hope we shan't. As for your going away now, I won't hear of it—why, bless me! it would be too ridiculous! What *have* you been doing with yourself all night? you will certainly make yourself ill. Really—really—this is too bad!"

The Dean was greatly moved.

"My dear father-in-law," said Jobson, "I am sorry to distress you—you are kind and affectionate as ever: but I have thought all this over very carefully. Something more is concerned in what I am doing than my relations to you—something more profound and serious. I know how you are situated. My own position is very delicate. My course is unalterably fixed. I shall leave the Deanery to-day, and Sylvia must go with me."

"Sylvia cannot leave!" cried the Dean, in his first surprise at this proposition.

"And why not, sir?" replied Jobson with warmth. "Would *you* advise your daughter and my wife to remain here against my wishes?"

"No, no—I did not mean that. I scarcely know what I am saying. This is so very sudden. Do be persuaded, Taddy, and go in with me, and let us confer with your father. You must not act hastily. All will be well."

"I will see Sir Arthur Jobson, sir; and I am persuaded he will approve of my determination. Nothing under heaven will alter it. The question has been raised, and there is only one way to settle it. Let it be done in the quietest possible manner."

The Dean, looking in the face of his obstinate son-in-law, saw something there which both convinced and alarmed him. It was evident that Jobson was grimly in earnest. Doctor Bromley took his arm. He loved him enough to make another effort.

"Taddy," he said, in an agitated tone, "for God's sake pause! Do not act wilfully and hurriedly. Go to your friend Winnistoun for an hour or two, and then come back here with him, and talk it over. This must not go on. I pledge you my word all shall be made right. The Bishop is not so uncompromising as you think; but at whatever cost to me, my dear boy, I cannot suffer what I see is coming if you persist in taking this headstrong course. Remember—family peace once broken can hardly ever be mended."

Thaddæus Jobson was moved by this outburst of the Dean's best nature.

"Dear Doctor," he said gloomily, but kindly, "I fear it *is* destroyed. I cannot take even Winnistoun into my confidence in this matter. It is one to be kept within our own family. Let us get it over in the quietest way possible."

The two men entered the house together, Doctor Bromley to seek counsel at the fountain-head, matrimonially speaking, and Jobson to try, as it were, to dam up that source, and stop its too impetuous flow.

He had already pondered what he was to say. His manner was calm and cold, but gentle.

"Sylvia," he said, "I am very sorry that we should have the least disagreement on any subject whatever, especially one which concerns the happiness of your father and mother. It seems our presence here is for the moment an inconvenience and a pain to them. Our duty is to go away—we can come back when time and consideration have softened down the Bishop's anger, or my motives and opinions are more correctly appreciated. I have seen your father this morning. He has generously begged me to remain, and even shown a readiness to brave the episcopal censure: but I feel what you seem to have felt, that it is better for us to relieve the Dean from the embarrassments which our remaining here would be sure to create."

"Have you reflected," said his wife, pale but assured, "that it is not *I* who am the cause of the embarrassment which exists? You have had time enough to think of it since you left me last night."

"I cannot charge myself, Sylvia," replied Jobson, "with having done anything wrong in giving utterance to my well-considered criticisms. They happen certainly to have caused a very unfortunate state of affairs here for us, through the irrational bigotry of a single man, and, as I said, I very deeply regret it, above all for your sake; but I cannot accept any responsibility for this embarrassment: we are both victims, *I* think, of a stupid error, and all we can do is to make the best of it and go away."

"You still persist in thinking you have done nothing worthy of censure in publishing that book?"

"Yes, Sylvia—if I must answer such a question—and to my wife."

"Then," replied Mrs. Jobson, "you may do as you like, I shall not go away."

The long night, the quiet, stern reproach of his absence had been more than she could endure, and her heart against him, at the moment, was as hard as steel.

Jobson, having taken off his coat, and standing with his hands in the pockets of his trousers, looked for a moment at his wife, with an indescribable mingling of wonder and scorn. Was it his wife who had spoken?

"You have well reflected—if I go away to-day you decline to accompany me? You know fully what you are doing? You do it deliberately? You take all the consequences? You thoroughly understand that I mean what I say—that I intend positively to leave the Deanery for London to-day—and wish and request you to accompany me? And, Sylvia, you mean me distinctly to understand that you refuse to go with me?"

His voice which had been hard and cold trembled with emotion as he put the last of these queries.

"I cannot go from my father's house," said Sylvia, trembling too on her part, for the pathos in his voice had stricken her, "driven away as if under a ban." She was trying to strengthen herself more than to convince him, by this epithet.

"Surely, you cannot be wrong in following your husband's fortunes and misfortunes so long as he asks of you nothing that is wrong or dishonourable. You yourself suggested that I ought to go—how can you now desire to stay?"

"Because you treat me like a child! You will not even allow me the privilege of my own judgment on your errors. Nothing will ever convince me that you have not committed a great and irremediable blunder, to say the least of it. You object to do or say anything to recant this error or to excuse it. My father and mother are placed in a false position—and so am I. How can I be happy with you so long as we remain so thoroughly disagreed?"

"You have just spoken the very thought that was passing through my own brain as you said it," replied Jobson, drawing a deep breath. "You are right. How can we be happy together so long as we are so thoroughly disagreed?"

He strode into his dressing-room and shut the door.

Sylvia remained a few minutes motionless, thunderstruck by the ending of this scene. A cold shudder came over her heart, as her mind rapidly revolved the consequences of the quarrel. Had her affection been deeper and truer, and her common-sense less rigid, she must then have besought Jobson, even through the oaken wall that had just closed between them, to open and let her in once more to his heart, to his life, to his high resolves and noble aims of work and duty. No one knew better than she how purely and constantly these things animated her husband's conduct. But she was not weak enough to give way. The fibre of her nature was as tough and hard as that of the oaken timber beyond which he was preparing to leave her, driven away by her want of sympathy, her egoistic discontent, her unqualifying firmness of judgment. She told herself that she could not bend—and it was true, in this sense, and if she were to yield after Jobson's peremptory words, she, Sylvia Jobson, must have felt for ever an unendurable mortification of defeat. Therefore she could not love; in a garden raked by such a harrow, the flowers and fruits of love could not bloom. These far-off *consequences* keenly appreciated by strong minds, often contribute to warp a

accurate judgment of the present and curiously disturb the balance of love and duty.

He went away, walking to the station and leaving his luggage to be sent after him. He avoided the Dean and Mrs. Bromley. He said not another word to his wife. Only he went up, and, with great tears in his eyes, almost sobbing, he clasped in his strong, loving arms the children whom he was never to see again.

CHAPTER LX.

A FACER.

THE end of the Long Vacation had come. The deserted Courts of the Temple were once more alive with boys and blue-bags, while the sober steps of Counsel learned in the law, and gouty attorneys steeped in old port, resounded on the flags of the grimy court-yards, and the oak of the foot-beaten stairs. The old grey benchler, in a seedy costume, who had had the walk on the mud-slavered bank of the Thames all to himself for so many weeks, now found his peace disturbed by students and young barristers, who, affecting to discuss Coke and Blackstone, or the more serious Glanville, in peripatetic fashion, lounged under the trees that were rapidly shedding their leaves upon gravel and grass. Justice, who had been asleep for three months, or only now and then lazily nodding her head or lifting her finger in some interlocutory proceeding in Judges' Chambers, now roused herself, and rubbed her eyes, and shook out her horsehair locks, and begun to look alive again. Dust-covered papers, routed out of chambers, began to fly about, fee-bearing, and, amongst others, in many a clerk's room, the briefs in the Armathwaite will case, big of size, lay thickly about. The cause was set down for trial at the sittings after Michaelmas term, and all the Counsel were hard at work ransacking their own brains and those of the ancient lawyers for clever points of law, to throw like dust into the already hoodwinked eyes of the beldame Justice.

Jobson above all was busy with this case, which distracted his mind from heavy cares, and even gave his heart some occupation, in the feeling that he was contributing to get the right done for an innocent and agreeable victim. For this was the solitary case of any importance that the

flight of legal papers at Michaelmas had brought to Jobson's chambers. Timpany's forecast was correct. No further briefs came from the valuable clients to whom Mr. Skirrow had been appointed managing-clerk.

There is a certain advantage, in favour of clients, not so often appreciated by the said clients as it ought to be, in a man's having only one brief to work at. His attention is not distracted and the case is sure to get the best of it. Clients who pay inordinate fees to barristers with great names, upon cases to which they do not give the compliment even of a thought, may derive some benefit from this hint.

Jobson was occupying the house in Great Charles Street alone. Mrs. Jobson and her children were still at the Deanery. Beyond the Jobson-Bromley circle little was known of the incident which had broken up the Dean's agreeable autumn party—brought Jobson to town so soon—sent Sir Arthur and Bertha to an unforeseen engagement at Torquay—and grievously disappointed Miss Raymond, when her *preux chevalier* of the law had been called off suddenly, on urgent business, to London.

And indeed that plea of "urgent business" had not been so unfounded as it was thought to be by those who used it.

There were other difficulties. Jobson had complete control of the funds left him by his uncle, and, as he had found his legal business dwindling, and his home expenses increasing—while the quiver became furnished with those infantile arrows which afterwards fly through life with so uncertain a result, and the demands of society, philanthropy and politics grew with feeding—he had made some efforts to turn over his resources in such a way as to produce a greater profit. Among other things he had been induced by a clever friend named Coxon, who had read at the bar and possessed some means, to invest a considerable sum in a business in the Potteries, "long-established and producing a minimum net profit of twenty per cent. which might with capital and good management be increased to forty per cent." So his friend had written. So Jobson had believed when—after reading up everything on the subject he could lay hands on, including statistics of production

and consumption for the particular wares manufactured in the works—he had given his friend ten thousand pounds to commence with, and had afterwards from time to time added to his advances till they nearly reached half his fortune. The first year had shown a very fair return—the second, owing to innumerable causes alleged by his friend, which, from their number alone, ought to have satisfied any reasonable being, had been rather worse than fruitless—the third year was the present and was bringing to Jobson just anxiety. He was unexpectedly asked to find three thousand pounds, which he could easily do by selling out canal shares, but he became startled on examination to find that even this small diminution of capital would, along with his loss of practice, make it impossible to cover his expenses by his income in the current year—a disagreeable novelty in his experience, which, as he was not a modern man of business, disturbed his mind. This and all his other weights of anxiety he carried alone. His wife had never known that the affair in Burslem was other than successful; neither Winnistoun nor Sir Arthur nor Miss Jobson had a suspicion of any difficulty connected with it.

For such crises bankers are supposed to exist, though it is often found that in such crises they are mere *tekel*. Jobson was obliged to visit his bankers and lay open to them the state of his affairs, and ask that they would help him, by advancing against his securities the money necessary to tide over the crisis. A man who has once been to his bankers on such an errand goes in with a blush on his face and comes away almost with the feeling of a woman who has lost her virtue. He is never the same man afterwards. He has exposed a weakness and asked a favour—two things which wound the very soul of every man of virgin honour. He has been obliged to own squarely to financial difficulties—which always wounds the man of pride. The Temple bankers of that day, who had appreciated Jobson's valuable account, were not very pleased to hear how their client was involved. In twenty-four hours they had taken means to ascertain the value and prospects of the business in which he was interested, and they sent for Jobson and told him that, in their opinion, without an expenditure of capital far

beyond what he and his associate Mr. Coxon could command, the manufactory would make nothing but losses. Their client took the report in good part, but went down to examine for himself, made inquiries, discussed the affair with his partner, and decided that at all events they must go on another year and "see what luck would bring them." And, rather than throw away twenty-five or thirty thousand pounds into the deep sea of dead-loss, anybody else would have done the same.

Entangled in all these difficulties, bleeding ever at the heart, assailed by the incessant slanders of anonymous writers as well as by the honest criticisms of men who did not know and understand him, Jobson yet held himself firmly up, bracing himself the more as he was being driven more and more by the times and his adversaries against the wall. His public work was as vigorous, as able as ever—in some respects better. Never had he made as good speeches, written finer articles, shown more energy and talent. Nothing was neglected. The giants Hope and Faith seemed to hold him up in their arms and inspire him with strength to shake off the weights which crush down feeble men.

To see him now, his fine intellectual face bent over Miss Raymond's papers as he calmly works up the case for the supreme effort close at hand, one would think that beneath that icy surface, the current of life ran calm and steadfast, untroubled by the rude breezes that sweep even great natures into stormy disquiet.

Upon him thus engaged, enters incontinently Mr. Timpany, a little older, a little drier, a little more assured from year to year of his own importance, but a true friend, because a true servant, of his master.

"If you please, sir," says Timpany, with an unwonted brightness in his eye, and a rosy blush on his face, "there is—a—a young person, sir, here with a particular private message from Mrs. Skirrow, that wants to see you immediately."

Jobson frowns a moment, but says nothing to Timpany to explain this phenomenon.

"Show him in, Timpany."

"I beg pardon, Mr. Jobson—it's—it's a young woman, sir."

Then Jobson's eye catches Timpany's, and he smiles at his clerk.

"Ah! I remember. Is it your old friend Miss Bopps? Have you kept up the acquaintance, then, ever since?"

"Yes, sir," replies Mr. Timpany, blushing now quite freely. "Miss Bopps and I are very friendly."

Jobson says no more, and Timpany ushers into the room Miss Bopps, rounder, rosier, jollier than ever, in a reddish dress and a white shawl enlivened with large blue flowers of the camomile pattern, and a poke bonnet, which her mother obliges her to wear, to keep her round merry face in something like Methodist trim. Timpany discreetly withdraws, and Jobson, kindly rising and placing a chair for Miss Bopps, who perches herself on the edge of it like a sparrow on the housetop, says:

"Well, Miss Bopps, I need not ask you how you do, with those cheeks and eyes. What message have you brought from Mrs. Skirrow?"

"Hif you please, sir, this morningk—has hi were a goin' hacrost Bow Street to Covent Garding Market, hi see Missis Skirrow a beckonin' hov me hover to come hacrost the street to 'er; hand she says, 'Come halong 'ere Hangelina, for hi wish to speak to yer'—hand she says, sir, says she, 'Hangelina, take this note hand 'ide hit quick—for no one must know hi've sent hit, and you go like a dear good girl and give hit hinto Mr. Jobson's hown 'ands has soon has hever you can. Hi've waited habout 'ere several times to catch yer, for hit's wery pertickler, hand maybe heven now hit comes too late—good bye,' says she, 'hand hif Mr. Jobson wants to send me hany message you can bring hit yourself,' says she, 'hafter ten hin the morning to the haddress in Maida Vale'—hand, sir, before hi could a said *bo!* she popped hout hov the place hand left me a standin' there hall halone. Hand so, sir," says Miss Bopps finishing off her recital by producing the missive, "there's the letter she gave me."

She hands it to Jobson, who breaks the seal and reads:

Crumple Block & Newsome have in their possession for

Moses and Moses, 278 Fenchurch Street, bills of Coxon and Co., amounting to six thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds, due November 10th, with instructions to present them, and if not paid to sue on them. Tom Skirrow is the clerk who has charge of the business. The bills have been twice renewed by Moses & Moses at Coxon's request by payment of £1000 each time, but it is not expected that this time he can pay the money. As it is known that you are not aware of these bills which were given for Mr. Coxon's private matters, a friend sends you this intimation.

5, WINWOOD CRESCENT, MAIDA VALE.

Jobson could not help growing pale as his eyes ran over this missive. However he dropped it from his hand and looked at Miss Bopps. He remembered it was Lord Mayor's day, the 9th of November. He had only twenty-four hours' grace.

"Have you seen the procession, Miss Bopps?"

"Ho! yes, sir, has hi come along hit were acomin' back from Westminster, helse I should 'a been 'ere sooner. Hit were beautiful!"

"Well, Miss Bopps, you have done me a service I can never repay you in coming so promptly with this letter." Angelina's face lighted up at these words. "If you should see the lady who gave it to you, please tell her also, with my compliments, that I am sincerely obliged to her for her information, but that I do not wish her to give me any more.—Now if there is any way in which I can possibly serve you at any time, Miss Bopps, please to tell me frankly. You can rely on my goodwill and friendship, for I am very grateful to you."

Angelina stood up, and turned red and white, and half opened her lips to say something, and then caught her breath and shut her lips again as if she were afraid to say it.

"Well," said Jobson kindly, "did you want to say anything?"

"Honly, sir, please," said Miss Bopps, blushing all over, "hif you please, sir, that hi 'opes you'll soon be Hattorney-general, sir—with thousands of law cases, sir, because, sir," said Miss Bopps, taking up a bit of her gown, in the absence

of an apron, and picking it with her fingers, as she looked on the ground, "Mr. Timpany hand me's to be married, sir, has soon has you're made Hattorney-general."

And Miss Bopps looked up with her blue eyes in Jobson's face, as if she believed he had nothing to do but say the word and convert himself into an Attorney-general before Christmas.

Jobson could scarcely command himself. Nothing could have so struck to his heart and made him more sensible of the painfulness of his position, of the blight of his highest aspirations, of the breakdown of the hopes which had supported the early earnest work of his professional career, and caused his friends to predict for him a brilliant success at the bar—than these few, naïve, absurd words of poor Angelina. It suddenly flashed before him that others had been depending on his successes, and would be failing with his failures, and this simple faith of Timpany and his little *fiancée*, touched him to the quick.

"My dear Miss Bopps," he said, taking her hand with its cotton envelope into his, and pressing it kindly, "it would give me a real pleasure to become Attorney-general to-morrow, if only to see you and Timpany made happy—if you really are fond of him—"

"Ho! Sir!"

"—But you know we cannot force these things. It is a long and a hard journey before that arrives, and I am afraid you would get very tired of waiting for it. I promise you I will see whether I cannot do something to bring this about long before I am Attorney-general."

Angelina went out with a radiant face, and considerable pride at the success of her simple but daring strategy; but Master Timpany, when informed of the conversation, by no means approved of it, and Miss Bopps left Pump Court with tears in her eyes, and a momentary idea in her mind that she ought to have taken to Mr. Statics, who was now a flourishing minister in City Road Chapel, and married to the daughter of Mr. Burgess, a pious and wealthy grocer and dealer in sugar.

There was a heavier heart than hers left behind her. Locking his door, Jobson strode up and down his room

trying to calm his mind and call up all his strength to take in hand the tremendous crisis which had come upon him. Like all men of powerful natures, he was somewhat of a fatalist. These are the natures that will not believe in the impossible, will not cease to make one more desperate effort even when the dark, muddy waters are closing over the lips for the third time, and nothing is left in the exhausted frame but a feeble tremor of life. These are the natures which, surrounded by enemies and amidst the raining blows which draw the life-blood oft and fast, yet stand up sturdily and even with a broken mace or sword, fight on for life, calling for no rescue. In a few minutes he mastered the confusion of his thoughts and arranged them in order. In this supreme moment everything was before him, as everything is said to come up before the mental vision of the drowning man. His literary fame, his political position, his professional prospects, his social future, and his personal honour were all involved in the crisis which must come to-morrow. Besides—did he know the worst? His friend, who had betrayed him, had he confined his evil-doing to this one transaction? and were there no more foes, with more secret bills to spring upon him? In spite of his forceful character, he grew cold and trembled at the apprehensions that would come and confuse every effort to think out a plausible course of action.

Two or three times in the hour, his thoughts had turned to Winnistoun, only to reject the idea of going to him. The two men had of late seen very little of each other. Jobson shrank from seeking his friend's society while carrying in his own heart troubles which he could not or would not open to him—a situation which is the less supportable the truer the friendship. Therefore he had kept away from King's Bench Walk and had only once seen Winnistoun since the Long Vacation. But now he was beginning to feel that the burden was becoming too great to be carried alone, and Winnistoun was the only person whom he could fitly ask to help him to carry it.

He unlocked the door, and rang his bell. His face and manner were quite calm when Timpany entered, looking

at him rather shyly, with the consciousness of Angelina's communication fresh upon him.

"Timpany," he said, "your friend Miss Bopps tells me that you and she are thinking of getting married some day—nay, don't blush—your choice does you credit—and she says you are to wait until I am Attorney-general ; or perhaps the Solicitor-generalship would satisfy you?"

"Oh ! if you please, sir, that was only my way of talking—I hope you don't feel angry—I should like to stay with you, always, whatever you are, sir," said Timpany, speaking up with deep feeling in his voice and manner.

"I thank you, Timpany," said Jobson, moved. "You have done more than you know of in saying those few genuine words. You have spoken like a true friend, and I value it highly. But now you must not put off this marriage until I am a law-officer of the Crown, which may be at the Greek Kalends, which is classic for 'never ;' and you have done me very faithful service, and you deserve to have it recognised. I shall make arrangements immediately to put aside for your marriage, whenever Miss Bopps is ready for you, four hundred pounds, which will bring you in at least twenty pounds a year, and I hope it may speed as well as increase your happiness."

Timpany, who knew nothing of his chief's embarrassments, hardly found words to express his joy at this generous promise, while Jobson, soothed for the nonce by the expansion of his sentiments, took his hat and went across the Temple.

CHAPTER LXI.

APPEAL TO MOSES.

WINNISTOUN, while he shook his friend warmly by the hand, gazed at him with keen and searching eyes. Indeed he was startled to see Jobson enter his room, for he was thinking of him. Almost under his hand lay a note received that morning. It was as follows :—

MY DEAR FRIEND,—

I am in the greatest anxiety about Taddy Jobson, who has been in London ever since he left Coverley, but has only written his father one short, rather anxious note, since then. I know he had some deep cause of trouble when he went to London, and this note, received some weeks since, seems to hint darkly at some other worries, of what kind I know not. Tell me whether you see him often?—is he well?—has he confided to you any of his difficulties? Only to you could I write these questions. I trust your discretion, and beg that you will get and give me some news of our dear Taddy, for somehow my heart is very heavy about him. His father, who must leave next week for Canada, will be in London in a few days.

Always your sincere friend,

BERTHA JOBSON.

Reading this letter, Winnistoun, who would have suffered death rather than leave untried an attempt to carry out any wish of Bertha's, bethought him that if Jobson had kept away from him since their return to town, he must have had a motive for it, but he felt that sounding for that motive would be like sounding in the deep sea. In the intervals of work he pondered an excuse for seeing Jobson, and while his mind was still engaged upon this, his man entered the room.

But it was not only Bertha Jobson's note which had set Winnistoun on the alert about his friend. The night before, sitting at dinner at the barristers' table in the Inner Temple with several thriving juniors, he had overheard the following conversation :

"Jobson, I believe, is on *your* Circuit, Rolleston. I hardly ever see him in Court now. Has he given up business entirely for politics?"

"I am afraid he will have to," said the other, "whether he likes it or not. My clerk tells me there is scarcely a brief in his chambers. Between ourselves"—this was said at an open table in the hearing of eight or ten men—"he is partner in a business in the Potteries which is not doing well. I have advised on a case to-day in which he is deeply concerned, involving a considerable amount of money."

Winnistoun was just about to pull up Mr. Rolleston for letting out professional secrets, when he suddenly bethought him that it might be as well to allow the conversation to run on and to learn the worst that was being said of Jobson.

"Ah!" interposed Mr. Hawkins, "there is worse than that going about *re* our friend Jobson. He has taken up the case of that Miss Raymond—you and I hold briefs in it, Rolleston—a very pretty girl, I am told, and somewhat of an intriguer—no chicken or goose either, as our papers show—eh?—and I heard from Crumple's managing clerk—that clever fellow, Skirrow—that it was likely some scandal about Jobson would come out in the case if the defendant were put in the witness-box. Of course," said Mr. Hawkins as if apologising for Jobson, "man is a human being. A pretty woman, you know, visiting a man's chambers—" he was winking, when Winnistoun suddenly interrupted him by bring his fist down on the table, making plates and glasses rattle as he said :

"Mr. Hawkins, it is a vile calumny. I will answer for Jobson's innocence of anything wrong or dishonourable. Let me tell you too your source of information is tainted. Crumple's managing clerk is an old schoolfellow, and an inveterate enemy of Jobson, if a fellow so contemptible as

I know him to be can be said to be an appreciable antagonist of as fine a fellow as ever breathed. It is unworthy of us," said Winnistoun, heightening himself, and glancing round with flashing eyes, "to be discussing one of our profession in such terms as these, and I for one protest against it, and I state that I am ready to vouch for the untruth of this scandal."

"Oh! I didn't mean any harm," replied Mr. Hawkins biting his lip. "Jobson is nothing to me nor I to Jobson. I simply related what people were saying about him. He is a conceited prig of a fellow, however you take him, in law or politics or society, and I have no special reasons for reserve in talking about him. We must all stand what the world says, I suppose, and there is nothing so sacred about Jobson that he is to be exempt from the common fate of mortals."

"Well," said Winnistoun, "I have to say that I will not sit by and hear such stories told of my friend Jobson without protesting in the strongest way that they are unfounded slanders, which bring no credit on those who repeat them, whoever they are. If you defend yourself for repeating them, I can only warn you that I do not feel bound to keep from Jobson the names of his libellers, and meantime for my own comfort I shall leave the table."

And he went out. They all knew and respected Winnistoun, and even Mr. Hawkins was sorry for the incident, though he was too stubborn to say so, but, in Winnistoun's absence, the discussion of Mr. Thaddæus Jobson's character and business was freed from restraint, and others graphically elaborated the sketch which the two learned gentlemen had already contributed to the amusement of their mess.

Winnistoun judged from this conversation that Jobson was in deep waters; Miss Jobson's letter confirmed the idea; and now the keen examination he made of Jobson's face convinced him that something more than serious was the matter. The troubled eyes, which almost shrank inwards from his glance, told him that he was not talking to his usual friend Taddy Jobson, but to another man—burdened and wounded.

Jobson then laid bare before the eyes of his friend the situation of his finances. His forty thousand pounds had dwindled down to nearly one-fourth of that sum.

They two put it down on paper and stared at it, and calculated, and conferred, but nothing could alter these facts in a memorandum which Jobson submitted to his friend.

MR. JOBSON'S FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Originally received from General Jobson's estate	£41,115
Duty and expenses of administration	£4,700
Depreciation of Securities	888
Lent Bulkely : no dividend yet	5,000
Placed in Coxon & Co.'s	10,000
Sundry advances	4,320
Advanced by Bankers, and Expenditure out of Capital	3,175
	<u>28,083</u>

£13,032

The title-deeds of the house in Charles Street, which had cost over £6,000, were in the Bankers' hands, and it seemed hardly possible that any more money could be raised on them.

Some East India shares and railway and other stocks represented the rest of Jobson's fortune. Mrs. Jobson's handsome annuity of £1,400 a year was of course put out of calculation by both the gentlemen.

"The situation is desperate," said Winnistoun, after they had twisted the accounts round, and swelled the assets to the utmost and given the losses the smallest possible proportions.

"And we don't know the worst of it," added Jobson. "Suppose that poor fellow Coxon has involved me in other liabilities !"

"What is your professional income ?"

"Last year it was twelve hundred—this year it will not exceed six, if it reaches that."

"And now tell me the cause of that ! Some busybodies were discussing you at the mess last night, and it seems to be known that your business is decreasing."

"Known !" cried Jobson, the angry blood mantling in his face. "Who has been talking about me ?"

"Many people are talking about you, and will talk. Surely you expect that. You cannot live in a glass-house on the top of a high hill without being observed by the curious and the envious. I wish, my friend, they would only speak of that which they can see—but, from what I hear, there is danger of your being made a butt of scandal."

"Scandal—good God! Winnistoun, what do you mean? You only know yet, my friend, half of what I have to carry. What is this you are going to add to it?"

They were standing—as energetic men always do when they have exciting matter in debate, and Jobson was looking in his friend's face with a clear and glowing glance.

"Nothing which affects my opinion of you, or is likely to be believed by anyone who knows you. But scandal is a viper which bites the heel, and is quite as dangerous there as in the face. I want to know how this has arisen. What have been your relations with your client Miss Raymond?"

"O," said Jobson, colouring slightly, "simply those of friendship. We met abroad when she was travelling with the Bratlings. She is a clever, amusing girl, and I saw a good deal of her. She told me her story and asked me to take an interest in her case. I did so, and am junior counsel. *Voilà tout!*"

"*Pardon, mon ami, est-ce que c'est tout?* It is said—mind I am only telling you what I hear—it comes from your old enemy Skirrow, that in the approaching case something compromising about you and her may come out in the witness-box."

"Well!" cried Jobson. "This is not to be endured! I will find out that fellow and cane him within an inch of his life."

"Nonsense. Do you want the scandal made ten times worse, and all your difficulties brought before the public? This is not my strong friend Jobson who is speaking, but a weak, enervated relic of him. What is the use of spoiling your cane on a cur's back? No, *mon ami*, you have enough on hand without adding to it all a police case and a scandal. But dismiss that. *Revenons*. Can you recall anything which an active malice could by any means distort into an incident of a compromising character?"

"Nothing. We had a good deal of intercourse abroad. I have seen her several times here, but always in ordinary circumstances."

"She has not been at your chambers?"

"Never."

"Good—if they take up that line they can injure none but themselves. Now it is half-past two o'clock and you must before this time to-morrow find seven thousand pounds or arrange for delay. How much money have you at your bankers'?"

"Not more than four hundred pounds to draw: and, by the way, whatever happens, I must save out of the wreck four hundred pounds for Timpany. I have just promised to give it to him when he marries."

Winnistoun regarded Jobson curiously, as if he were making a mental note upon him, but made no audible remark.

"There is no possibility of communicating with your father now?" he said.

"It is out of the question. Besides I would never entertain it. He has enough to do for the rest in Canada."

"The Dean is rich—"

"My dear fellow," replied Jobson wincing, "you touch there upon the worst raw of all. Now I have come to you, I am bound to tell you everything. I have left the Dean's house never to return—and my wife remains there."

Winnistoun threw himself into a chair and gasped for breath.

"O Jobson, Jobson!" he cried out, with his hand on his breast, "are the heavens falling? What does this mean? You are terrible—you tell me with a calmness which is incomprehensible, one dreadful thing after another, any one of which is enough to upset an ordinary intellect."

"Ah! the torture and the suffering are the deeper," answered Jobson, pointing to his heart. "You must remember I have been feeding on these sorrows here for many months."

Winnistoun took his hand.

"But what is it? I knew you had left the Deanery, called away, I was told, by business. I had not the faintest suspicion of any family troubles."

"Well," said Jobson, with a grim smile, "it will appear to you very ridiculous, but this tempest was stirred up by the Bishop of Coverley, and over no more serious a matter than that unlucky *Quæstio Quæstionum*."

"Whew!" sighed Winnistoun. "I see through it all now! I remember—the garden, Garwood's mischievous praise, Lord Bratling's malicious words, madame's manner, the Dean's embarrassment, all are before me now! But how could these things bring about any serious disagreement between you and your wife?"

"You may well ask," said Jobson, gloomily and bitterly. "You may well ask, my dear Winnistoun. There are experiences of which it would be impossible for any man of right feeling to expose the details even to a bosom friend like you. It would offend you were I to relate incidents and conversations such as pass between a man and his wife, who are not in perfect unity. You are a lucky man—you have never had the experience, you never will have it. The sorrow of it is too keen to be described—or repeated. It is like a blood-red vein across the white marble of a pure married life—the noblest of all human ideals of truth and happiness. Enough to say that the Bishop of Coverley, playing upon minds already, I fear, prejudiced against me, declined to meet me at the Dean's house, because I was, in his opinion, an enemy of the Faith. The mere whisper of anything like this brought up before the eyes of my mother-in-law a vision of Voltaire, Volney, Tom Paine, and the Original great Doubter, and made the Dean's flesh creep with horror. You can understand this. You, as I, were not always emancipated. Sylvia has been brought up in that school—you cannot blame her if she should be somewhat inspired with its bigotries; her mother's influence over her is great, notwithstanding her own strength of mind and will; from the first she disagreed with me about the policy of publishing such a book, and was pained by its sarcasms. The Bishop's pettish protest, coming home to all of them so keenly, has disturbed their judgments. The Dean—worthy old gentleman—tried his best to screw up his courage to resist the episcopal ban, but the ladies were too strong for him. Behind and beneath all this, some-

thing occurred between my wife and me ; it was a profound disagreement, involving the very principles of a true married life, and as the difference was fundamental and not to be healed, she has stayed at her father's and permitted me to live by myself:—And so, my friend, here you see me ; a well-to-do man on the verge of bankruptcy—a public man on the brink of a gulf of infamy—a married man without a wife—a member of a large family and circle of acquaintances almost without a friend to consult in the middle of a mortal crisis.

But," said Jobson, breaking away and pacing up and down the room with his crest erect, and his face flushed with energy and boldness, "I will not break down ! I will *not* give way without some effort—and now tell me how the fight is to be conducted ?"

Winnistoun had not interrupted his friend during this explanation. While Jobson had been speaking, the other's mind had been rapidly filling in the body of the outline sketch which Jobson was giving him. He appreciated more thoroughly than Jobson suspected, the exact state of affairs.

"Jobson," he said, "if this gets out you are ruined. A whisper on the one side about Miss Raymond, on the other about this disagreement—I will not call it by any more serious name—and heaven knows the end ! You must write at once for your Aunt Bertha." Jobson shook his head. "Excuse me, you must place yourself absolutely in my hands or I cannot help you. My dear fellow, one of the most promising careers in England is at stake in this crisis. Frankly, at the moment, I don't know how I can safely steer you through the rapids. Still—courage ! You are strong and steady ; *you* pull *your* oar manfully, and I will take the helm, and by the help of God, dear boy, we will win through. Give me your hand."

Each warmly pressed the other's palm, in that sole dignified embrace of Englishmen, and each felt strengthened.

"Now, I go. You write to your Aunt to come up immediately—say that Winnistoun thinks it advisable."

"Where are you going?—to Childs' ?"

"No -no ! We must not let our bankers know what a scrape we are in till we learn the worst ourselves. I will go

and look for Moses in the city fens." And with this bad pun Winnistoun rushed out to get a cab in Fleet Street, and hurry into the Jews' quarter, which lies all the way between St. Paul's and the East of Houndsditch.

CHAPTER LXII.

A GOOD DEAL MORE ABOUT MOSES.

IT was late when Winnistoun returned to Jobson's chambers, and he looked very grave. But he made a violent effort to put on a cheerful countenance, and said :

"Well, Moses is implacable. He has become quite as obstinate as his old antagonist, Pharaoh. I need not describe him to you. He is double-headed. He is aged fifty and twenty-five respectively. His noses were run in the same mould. He is able, sharp, and, in this particular instance, dirty. Excuse these details. He told me your friend Coxon had had two renewals, and he would not grant another. He says he knows all about you, and he seems to think that you are reaching the end of your financial tether. He wants his 'monish.' However, he referred me to his solicitors. I spent an hour with him, and used every argument I could. I even drank a quantity of some horrible mixture called 'Shrub,' which he was hospitable enough to offer me as a stranger within his gates. He said he wouldn't mind doing a 'thou' for me at any time, 'reasonably.' No use. I cabbed it back to Crumple Block and Newsome's. There I was at once referred to your friend Mr. Skirrow, who, I was informed, had the matter in hand. He was in a small dingy room, with a handful of furniture, sitting at a desk covered with papers and other legal rubbish. The boy had told him that I called in Coxon's matter. When I entered he was writing and whistling. I stood silent a minute. He did not look up. I remained standing. As you were in question, I let him alone. At length he glanced at me superciliously.

"'Do you want to speak to me ?' he said coolly.

“‘I can hardly imagine any other reason for my being in this room,’ I replied quietly, ‘unless it were to kick you, and that would be beneath me.’

“‘What the d—— do you mean?’ he said turning very red, but not offering to resent my words in any active manner.

“‘What I mean, sir,’ I said, ‘irrespectively of the devil, is that I, a barrister of the Inner Temple, Mr. Winnistoun by name, have been referred to you as the managing clerk of a respectable firm of solicitors, and that I will be treated by you with proper courtesy, or I will see your senior, with whom I am acquainted, and will know the reason why not.’

“‘I—I beg you pardon, sir,’ said the miserable cur rising, ‘I was not aware who you were, and—and—’

“‘And,’ I added, ‘you showed yourself in your natural colours, Mr. Skirrow. Now let me beg of you to give me the advantage of seeing you in your conventional dress. Pray sit down, sir,’ and I myself took a seat. Mr. Skirrow seemed affected by my manner of taking him, and he very meekly sat down. I never took my eye off him.

“‘I am come,’ I said, ‘Mr. Skirrow, on the subject of Coxon and Company’s acceptances. You are aware, I know, that my friend Mr. Jobson is a partner with Mr. Coxon.’

“He pricked up his ears and looked at me very sharply.

“‘How did you get to know anything of Mr. Coxon’s acceptances, sir?’ he inquired.

“‘In the simplest manner in the world, sir; from Mr. Jobson himself.’

“‘How on earth did *he* get to know?’ he said half to himself, his eyes and cheeks glowing with anger. ‘Who let that out? Not Mr. Coxon, I’m sure.’

“‘It is of no consequence, sir,’ I answered, ‘Mr. Jobson knows all about it, and the bills are due to-morrow. You represent Mr. Meshech Moses, who has referred me to you, and I wish to know on what terms the bills can be renewed?’

“‘They cannot be renewed at all, sir; they must be paid. If they are not paid to-morrow they will be protested.’

“‘They have been renewed twice before, at Mr. Coxon’s

instance ; why not once more ? We are ready to offer handsome terms.'

" ' They will not be renewed, sir, for *cent. per cent.* That is why they are placed in our hands. There is to be no more business.'

" ' Supposing I offer you first-class security—'

" He interrupted me.

" ' The only security our client will take, sir, is cash down.'

" ' Thank you,' I said, rising, ' you have the merit at least of being explicit. The bills will be paid on presentation.' And I came away without wishing him good day. He looked very sour."

" But," cried Jobson, " my dear Winnistoun, what did you mean ? I cannot pay them on presentation, unless you can find me a gold mine in my cellar."

" Better than that, my dear friend," interrupted the other, " you will find it in my secretary. I have eight or ten thousand pounds of values there which, I fancy, will satisfy even your bankers."

" I won't hear of it, Winnistoun—dismiss that idea at once."

" Stay," said the barrister, " I anticipated this. It is only like you. But, Jobson, I am acting in the absence of your friends, especially of one dear to both of us, whose happiness and honour are as much involved in your good name as in her own. She is not here, but were she here, I claim that you would have no right to trifle with the family name and position, from an idle sensitiveness about accepting her aid. That family name and fame are also very dear to me, Thaddæus Jobson, and you must give me leave, in the absence of those most interested, to act as a guardian of them, and of you. I tell you candidly, even brutally, that it is not only *you* whom I am considering, in acting as I propose."

Winnistoun had spent nearly an hour walking about his favourite Temple gardens, thinking out the ingenious plot developed in the above words. He knew that Jobson would never consent to take the proffered aid for himself, but, in putting it as he had done, he judged

that it would be impossible for his friend to refuse him.

"Winnistoun," cried Jobson, seizing him by both hands, "you are the most Mephistophelean of good angels! You have been concocting this, to force me to accept your generous, your too chivalrous assistance. It is impossible to reject it; but how can I repay you? I will allow you to help me, only on one condition. If my aunt insists on relieving you from the liability you now incur, you give me your word of honour you will permit it—and in any case, you agree to my immediately taking steps to realise, from the remnant of my own fortune, the means of restoring to you your property."

"Agreed," said Winnistoun. "I will go at once and fetch the papers. You must see the bankers at ten to-morrow morning."

He was giving away all that he possessed in the world, but he did it with as cool an air as that of the celebrated Mr. Peter Schlemihl, when he was drawing from the depths of the inexhaustible purse. Winnistoun belonged to that curious race of maniacs with whom friendship and humanity are superior to self-interest. Were one to say this to a millionaire, he would reply that he could never have become a millionaire had he acted on that principle. And nothing is more true.

The next morning Winnistoun's stocks went into the gaping jaws of Childs' Bank, the barrister not even following them with a sigh as he saw them vanish. For the moment Jobson was saved. The bills were paid. But Jobson immediately took steps to sell off his remaining stocks, and to get rid of his lease in Great Charles Street. Moreover it was necessary to go down to Burslem and come to an explanation with his friend Mr. Coxon, who had returned no answer to frequent messages. A telegram received from the foreman of the works hastened his visit. It said:

"Don't know where Mr. Coxon is. He has been away from here ten days. No money in safe to pay the men. Please give immediate attention."

Supplied with a couple of hundred pounds in cash, Jobson was in the factory at Burslem on the same evening.

He had to sleep in the little house lately occupied by his partner. It was too obvious from its aspect that Mr. Coxon had taken a leave that was French and definitive. All the drawers were empty, except of wastepaper; the secretary had been turned out, and a quantity of papers abstracted or destroyed. Nothing remained of the clever partner excepting his old office coat and cap, which hung melancholy behind the door of his room. When Jobson next morning came to go over the works with the foreman, he found that the stock had been reduced so low by recent sales, as scarcely to leave a show for customers. The supply of clay, of coal, of everything necessary to the manufacture had been allowed to run out; wages were in arrear; the last rent was unpaid. Eight hundred pounds would meet these liabilities, and enable him to discharge the workpeople, and shut up the place. He could not stay to attend to this. He had to send for the inevitable solicitor, who is the maggot that feeds on the decay of industry, of property, and of credit. And he went back to London to attend to Miss Raymond's case with a gloomy presentiment that perhaps he had not even yet touched the bottom of his partner's malversations.

Bertha Jobson and his father were waiting for him when he arrived at Great Charles Street. Winnistoun had told them all about the financial difficulties, but he concealed, even from Bertha, the serious state of relations with the Bromleys. That was a matter for Jobson to explain when and how he chose.

Bertha opened her arms to her nephew and embraced him warmly.

"Dear boy!" she said—it seemed so absurd coming from her to the big manly fellow before her—"it is all right. I sent Mr. Winnistoun seven thousand pounds to-day. Coutts did it at once. There is plenty left for me, and, besides, Sylvia has enough for both of you."

Jobson winced, while he pressed her hand tightly. He could not speak. He embraced his father who looked grave and troubled.

"I never felt happy about your association with that man, Taddy. He was not a gentleman, with all his

university airs. It is a great loss ; bear it like a man, my son. If I can help you, you know, 'all that I have is thine.' It will take a long time to make it up."

"Oh, no!" cried Bertha Jobson. "Taddy will not want anything from you. Harry's fortune belongs to both of us, and as long as anything remains half is Taddy's." A regular woman's idea of division.

Jobson listened with anguish—delicious as was the comfort conveyed by these kind words, dropping from loving lips. They cut him more deeply than a volley of sarcasms and reproaches.

"Aunty," he said, "I suppose for your two good sakes and those dear to us, I must accept your generous aid. But it is on one condition. I will work night and day until I can make it up to you."

Firmly as he attempted to utter these brave words, there was a tremor in his voice, his eye was troubled, his pallid face showed how painfully he was suffering. There was weariness in his attitude and movement. Bertha Jobson and his father noted all this with sorrow. They made him sit down, and began to talk to him.

"You are young yet," said his father, striving to be cheerful. "Your honour and good name are saved. Nothing can crush a brave heart true to itself—" And so on—the banal encouragements of love and kindness.

In a few days, Sir Arthur Jobson left for Canada. He charged Winnistoun to keep him informed of Taddy's position. They all had a fear lest the whole of Coxon's delinquencies had not yet appeared. Inquiries were made—a few more outstanding debts were discovered and paid. It was ascertained that Mr. Coxon had left for America, relegating explanations with his partner to some future stage of existence not defined.

As Jobson was about to abandon the establishment in Great Charles Street, he deemed it right to inform his wife of the state of affairs. He did it by a memorandum addressed to her, and marked *confidential*, which, however, she immediately showed to her mother.

The answer was rude and heartless. Like his own letter, it began and ended without an endearing epithet ;

but, unlike that, it did not strictly confine itself to business.

"I was, as you know, always opposed to your investing any money in affairs which you did not understand. The man Coxon was scarcely endurable, for all his good connections—but he was a *friend of yours*—and I, of course, took it for granted that you knew all about him, and would have had nothing to do with him, unless he were a thoroughly trustworthy person. You have either been criminally heedless or shamefully deceived. Late events do not do much credit, I must say, to your judgment. And now our beautiful home has to be broken up. I am obliged to you for offering me an opportunity of saying what I wish retained. It is of no consequence to me, since for the present, at all events, I see no prospect of our needing any of those things which go to make a *home* elegant and comfortable. It is fortunate for me that I have a father's house to go to—and those who not only love me, but respect my opinion, and set *some* value on my judgment. My happiness is gone, and I am obliged to endure the inconveniences of an odious position. In the circumstances, if you remain in the same state of mind in which you left me, would it not be proper that you or your friends should have some consultation with my natural guardians, as to the arrangements which ought to be made for the welfare, at least, of your children—if you are indifferent to that of your wife."

All the ingenuity of a small soul, instigated by a strong mind, penetrated every word of this letter. It might have been regarded, by an admiring friend of Mrs. Thaddæus Jobson, as a masterpiece of fine irony and powerful reproach. Read by Jobson, it was cruel almost to wickedness, perverse, with every refinement of meanness and egoism. It is only women—and a few Irishmen—who can pen such specimens of unjust and injurious cruelty.

It was natural that this letter, kept to himself, should not only have wounded Jobson afresh, but steeled his heart against the writer. How could a truly loving woman have penned such hard, unsympathetic words? How was it possible for him, without absolutely throwing over his self-respect, to try to soften one who could express herself to him

like this? A man may bear an injustice which involves only a material or social injury; and forgive the one who inflicts it, even if the latter have shown some imperfect appreciation of moral obligations: but what is to be done with one who, assuming an unwarrantable moral superiority, and demanding an impossible moral submission, proceeds to use against you all the weapons of scorn, of sarcasm, of misrepresentation? To yield, in such a case, is not only to do yourself an injustice, it is hardly a pardonable weakness. It is giving the victory to the baser nature, and no one ought to carry out the "turning the other cheek" principle to that extreme. Each of us owes something to society at large, as well as to ourselves, and it is the peculiar duty of strong natures to battle, on behalf of all good and gentle and loving souls, against the arrogance of pride, ill-nature, and selfishness.

In the case of the Jobsons, the humiliation of Jobson before his wife, would not only have spoiled a noble nature in him, it would have contributed to fix the unhappy character of Sylvia, and made their married life a purgatory.

Still, even while her letter wounded him to the quick, he gallantly strove to invent a theory to account for her present frame of mind. He would willingly have forgiven her everything but the scorn, the scorn which was not that of conscious supremacy, but the vicious anger of wounded vanity.

He did not reply. It was clearly necessary that he should ask some one to intervene to make the arrangement hinted at by Mrs. Jobson at the close of her letter. Up to this time he had been hoping that Sylvia's own good-sense, and her father's high-bred, frank, and Christian feeling would have led to some attempt at a reconciliation. But the Deanery was silent as a grave in which love and Christianity had been buried.

No cruelty is more hard and inflexible than that which comes from religious persuasion. When a man believes that he is acting in accordance with the dictates of religion, unfairness and injustice are the least of the crimes which he can commit with a merry heart. It was not difficult for Moses to persuade the children of Israel that it was a proper

thing to borrow the jewels of the Egyptians and bolt with them across the Red Sea, when he had begun by declaring to them that it was the will of the Lord. On the same grounds Joshua killed all the men, women, and children in Jericho, and all the Jews who were feeble enough to spare a Canaanite. And for the same reason, many pious people, who cannot burn a heretic in this world, reflect with satisfaction that he will at all events fry in the next.

CHAPTER LXIII.

SUMMUM JUS SUMMA INJURIA.

THE action of "Sandon and others *v.* Raymond and another" was set down for hearing on the second day of the sittings after Michaelmas Term. The Attorney-general, Sir Glanville Marchmont; the celebrated dry-law junior, Mr. Marcus Tubbs; and Mr. Thaddæus Jobson, were the names of the counsel on the backs of the corpulent briefs delivered on behalf of the defendant. The Attorney-general's brief carried the handsome endorsement of five hundred guineas, with ten guineas for consultation. Mr. Tubbs had two hundred and fifty of the same non-existent coins, though anything but nominal values, marked on his papers; and Mr. Jobson, in addition to all the fees he had taken for the pleadings and interlocutory proceedings, found himself down for one hundred guineas. The estate was a fat one; it would stand the costs; and attorneys can afford to be generous with money which does not come out of their own pockets. As the time approached, Jobson forgot all his other anxieties, in the excitement of defending Miss Raymond's interests. A note had come to him from her, innocent enough, but it made his heart beat a little quicker, and a slight flush pass over his face as he read it.

"My dear Friend—," it said, "I depend entirely upon you. I don't believe in my attorneys. They have been advising me to settle. They think I ought not to go into the witness-box, they pretend that I would be damaged by the cross-examination. It is infamous to make any such suggestion. I only wish a chance to tell my own story. My conscience is clear. I have nothing to conceal or to excuse. I look to you to see that I have fair play. You are my chosen knight. Set your lance in rest. I know you are strong and brave. *May God defend the right!*"

This Epistle made Jobson anxious. Such a letter ought not to have been written to a counsel, on the eve of a trial, by a client, especially by a charming woman. One cannot explain why he folded the letter up carefully, put it in his breast-pocket, and carried it there till the trial was over. This young lady believed in him, trusted him. He was her *preux chevalier*. And at this moment his lawful wife was absent from him, estranged in heart and feeling, and not only not believing in him, but sympathising with those who were against him.

The court sat at ten o'clock at Westminster. At nine o'clock there was a conference, this conference costing Miss Raymond about thirty guineas, and lasting about ten minutes. It was held in the room of the Attorney-general. At that hour the clerks of Mr. Tubbs, of Mr. Jobson, of the Attorney-general, or Messrs. Hawke & Shearer all met in the passage, each of them bearing the portentous bundle in which the fortunes of the defendant were wrapped up. Timpany looked big and felt happy. He regarded Sir Glanville Marchmont's clerk with the eyes of one who is studying his predecessor, and is taking note of the manner in which a man ought to carry himself when he becomes clerk to a law-officer of the Crown. Mr. Tubbs arrived ; Mr. Hawke, of Hawke and Shearer, arrived ; Mr. Thaddæus Jobson arrived. Each seized his own bundle from his clerk, and entered the miserable little room of the Attorney general, who received them with a friendly nod. He was standing with his back to the fire, a coat-tail over each arm.

"Are Motcombe and Motcombe waiting?" he said to his clerk, who was about to leave the room.

"They are out in the Hall, I think, Sir Glanville. They will be with you in ten minutes."

The great lawyer nodded. He had given a neat hint to his present clients to get out of the way in as few minutes as there were guineas on his brief for this critical conference.

"I have an important case in the Exchequer this morning," he said, addressing himself to Mr. Tubbs ; "is this case to be fought out?"

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Mr. Tubbs looked at Mr. Hawke, Mr. Hawke looked rather curiously at Mr. Jobson.

"Well—Sir Glanville," he said, "our client is very determined—she will not hear of a settlement—she insists on going on at any risk."

"Yes—well—the case seems plain enough, does it not? Medical evidence first-rate, fellow executor, old Sir Edward Belknap—a capital man—the will drawn by old Bland—why shouldn't we go on?"

Mr. Hawke glanced again at Jobson.

"The case would be indisputable, Sir Glanville, only—the question is whether we can discreetly call the defendant?"

"Of course, we must call the defendant, I don't see how we can go to the jury without her. Why shouldn't we?"

"That is exactly the question, Sir Glanville. She is a young lady—very attractive—rather an excitable person—the circumstances are peculiar—such a very large estate left to a stranger—and then you know those compromising relations with the father of the deceased."

"What do you mean? There is nothing about those things in the papers, is there? Where is it?"

"Nowhere," said Jobson firmly, "and for a very good reason: they don't exist."

The words came from him almost unconsciously. As they passed his lips he regretted them.

Sir Glanville turned to him with a quizzical look.

"Mr. Jobson, I believe, knows the defendant intimately," said Mr. Hawke, with a dry and meaning emphasis."

"I do know Miss Raymond," said Jobson, "and have for some time, and can hardly agree with Mr. Hawke that she is an excitable person. I think she will make a very fair witness. Moreover, I am assured that there was nothing in her relations to old Mr. Armathwaite which she need care to conceal."

Tubbs was gravely tying up his brief, into which he had affected to look a moment, and the Attorney-general gave a dry cough.

He turned to the attorney-particular.

"What is it, Mr. Hawke? Let's have it out—what are you alluding to?"

"Well, Sir Glanville, I hear from the other side that they are going to produce some extremely compromising evidence about Miss Raymond—at all events, they intend to cross-examine her with regard to incidents in her travels with Mr. and Miss Armathwaite, which might injure her case materially with the jury. I know Mr. Bland, of Bland and Smirke, retired from the case in consequence of his disagreeing with our client in regard to her conduct with Mr. Armathwaite. I don't pretend for a moment to insinuate there is any truth in the imputations, but still it would, I venture to say, be very damaging for Miss Raymond, with submission to counsel."

"Certainly we ought not to run any risks," said Mr. Tubbs, solemnly. He raised a pair of eyes, bleared by overwork and bad midnight oil, to his leader.

"Hum!" said Mr. Attorney-general, scratching his dry cheek with the nail of his forefinger, which produced a slight grating sound, "it looks like a case for settlement, eh, Tubbs?"

"I am strongly of opinion, Sir Glanville," said Jobson,—
"and I have given the closest attention to this case throughout,—that this is a case which ought not to be settled on any account; and for the very reason hinted at by Mr. Hawke. Miss Raymond's character is really in question; she earnestly desires, and she ought to be allowed, an opportunity of vindicating herself."

The Attorney-general shook his head, and there was a little contempt in his tone.

"Never put a client in a dangerous position, if you can help it, Jobson," said he, "that's my principle. Do you think she would agree to a settlement?" he added, turning to the solicitor.

"I—I really don't know," replied Mr. Hawke, now looking at Jobson, who sat fuming between his own conviction that the attorney was telling a tremendous lie, and his consciousness that the etiquette of his profession exacted strictly that he should not contradict his client's statement. He had, indeed, no business to know anything that had not

been imparted to him by this man, either through his brief or in consultation.

"Would the other side agree to a settlement?" continued the Attorney-general.

"My impression is they would be glad to arrange on any terms," replied the lawyer. "It is now only an attorney's case—their clients have no money." Sir Glanville nodded. "Apart from what they can make out of the defendant's cross-examination, they have really not a leg to stand on—but—" He seemed to wait for someone to finish his sentence—which the Attorney-general, seeing his way to earn his fees, and save himself a long, hard job, promptly did.

"But—we are bound," he said, lifting his head and gazing at the ceiling—"we are bound to consider among our client's interests the protection of her character. That is a first consideration. If they have any little scandals to bring up against her—it would be most injudicious—for her own sake—young—unmarried—with a future before her—to put her in the witness-box. No amount of money can compensate for damaging insinuations in cross-examination, and Rigby won't spare her, you may depend upon that. It certainly had not occurred to me in reading the papers," he added, with as much gravity as if he had perused every word. "Young women are young woman"—this with a half-humorous look at Jobson—"and no doubt there must have been a good deal of intimacy between the parties which may have given rise to compromising situations."

The Attorney-general's clerk put his head in at the door.

"Motcombes?" inquired the leader of the Bar.

"Yes, Sir Glanville."

"Ah! well, gentlemen, *au revoir*. We shall meet again at Philippi. Mr. Hawke, you had better see your client and persuade her to accept a settlement, if the other side are not too unreasonable."

And the two junior counsel departed, Jobson biting his lips, while Mr. Hawke remained to exchange a word with the Attorney-general.

"Our client is not here, Sir Glanville," he said, in a low tone, "and I don't think she will be here. She knows they are going to rake up some unpleasant incidents, and," he

added, with a smile and a respectful half-wink—Sir Glanville had been a favourite junior of his firm for many years —“there is some little rumour of an intimacy between her and our junior; you see how he stood up for her.”

“Ha! ha!” said Sir Glanville, laughing cynically. “I don’t believe there is anything in *that*, but it would be awkward to have a scandal brought up, you know. We must settle this case, Mr. Hawke—better for all parties. It is always invidious to fight against relatives. I will see what Rigby has to say when the case is called on.”

Jobson rushed into the robing-room, donned his wig and gown, and made for the Court, hoping to find an opportunity to pass a word with Miss Raymond. She was not there. He took his place, and began arranging his papers. Mechanically he turned them over giving a last glance—here and there marking once more a salient point. The Court began to fill. There were the dingy, dirty, depressed-looking loungers on the back benches, those melancholy creatures who, during sittings, live in the precincts of Westminster Hall, who, day after day, take their places, and listen with an odd stolid interest to arguments *in banco* as dry as old cheese-parings; or to the livelier sparring between the counsel on the days devoted to motions; or to the jury cases, with their speeches and cross-examinations: a quaint crowd, living no one knows how, no one can guess where, content to find warmth, a seat, and an intellectual titillation in the everlasting logomachy of an astute, if not often brilliant, bar. In mid-court were several rows of juniors, whose clean fresh-looking wigs betrayed the rawness of their professional status, attracted by the rumour that there was to be a lively case, with a pretty woman in it, and a touch of scandal; groups of attorneys in the well—the attorneys in the first cause and their clerks unloading bundles of papers—those engaged in all the other cases in the list waiting to see whether the first one would go on; counsel in the other suit eagerly inquiring of Jobson, or his junior opponent, who came in and took a seat beside him—whether there was any chance of the case “going off:” the ushers—the masters—the waiting jurymen—some ladies; but, often as Jobson glanced round, no Miss Ray-

mond. He became nervous and anxious. He went out into Westminster Hall, and scanned the various groups, in the hope of seeing the neat figure and attractive form of his client. She was not to be seen. When he got back to the court, he was obliged to force his way to his seat through a mixed crowd of attorneys, clients, counsel, and loungers who had rushed in upon the entry of the judge. The Attorney-general was in the front row—his well-dressed wig bobbing against the old, dark, dusty horsehair of Mr. Rigby, Q.C.

Mr. Tubbs was in his place.

"We are going to settle," he whispered to Jobson.

"It is an outrage," said Jobson, angrily.

"Tsh! what's the use of fighting? We shall get off in ten minutes—and the young lady will have a handsome fortune. I say, Jobson, is she really good-looking? She ain't here, you know—and that seems suspicious."

Jobson said nothing. His heart sank within him. He had made up his mind to win this case. Miss Raymond should come out of it with flying colours, her character vindicated before the world. Perhaps he had in fancy seen her expressive face, with a pleased blush, as she pressed his hand and thanked him for her triumph. Before he could answer, Mr. Tubbs, the Attorney-general, and Mr. Rigby were both on their feet. The judge, who had seen the leaders in consultation, and knew how much of relief there was to be hoped for from that phenomenon, had affected to be engaged in perusing his notebook and arranging his desk. He looked up as the counsel rose.

"Well, Mr. Attorney?"

"I am happy to say, my lord," said the leader of the bar, "that my learned friend and I have conferred together, and we have been able to agree upon terms which will render it unnecessary to trouble your lordship and the jury with the case. My learned friend, I think, agrees with me that the evidence in my client's favour is too strong to be resisted. The defendant is clearly entitled to a verdict. Nevertheless the plaintiffs have, admittedly, all along been persuaded of the justice of their case—until they had had the advantage in conference of getting the invaluable opinion upon it of

my learned friend. My learned friend feels that he cannot successfully struggle against the overwhelming evidence in favour of the will. On the other hand his clients have been put to great expense—they had, as I said, a firm belief in the justice of their cause. They were intending to rest their case on some circumstances in the relations between the defendant and the father of the testatrix; a juror is withdrawn—the plaintiffs' costs, as agreed between the attorneys on both sides, will be paid out of the estate."

"A very judicious settlement," said Mr. Justice Meeson, taking a pinch of snuff. "I congratulate you, Mr. Attorney and Mr. Rigby, on having arrived at so reasonable a conclusion. What is the next case?"

Jobson bundled up his papers and, without exchanging a word with anybody, rushed out of court. He felt half-suffocated by the emotions which rose within him. Indignation, disappointment, shame possessed him at the injustice done to his client, at the farce played by his colleagues and the attorneys to whom she had confided her cause. What was the use of talking of *justice* in face of the parody of this morning? what was to be thought of the high ideal of an advocate, before the conduct of the great man who, leading the most distinguished bar in the world, threw over the rights and the good name of a woman, in order to save himself a day's hard work, and to perform the difficult feat of appearing in two cases at the same time? From Jobson's point of view the proceedings were almost infamous. It was not till he had walked halfway down the Strand that he began to reflect that his learned friends were not so much to blame. They had been misled by their clients. They might very well have believed that there were some things in Miss Raymond's life which had better not be "ripped up." It reminded him of himself. How simply one falls into the traps of fate? How hard it is to explain the most innocent events, if they only happen in certain conjunctures? How utterly men and women are at the mercy of the bad digestions, overworked brains, weary ambitions, imperfect moral sense, of their paid and trusted advisers and agents?

He penned a brief note to Miss Raymond, frankly stating the facts, saying that he had been overborne by

wiser judgments, expressing his regret and his sympathy, yet congratulating her that she had come off with a very handsome success.

Two days passed. Jobson and Timpany had begun to get over the first disappointment. Miss Raymond had not replied to his note. He was sitting at breakfast in the solitary house in Great Charles Street, when the door opened and, before the servant could announce her, Miss Raymond, in a travelling costume, entered the room like a thunderbolt.

"Well, Mr. Jobson!" she cried, with flashing eyes, "you *have* made a mess of it!"

Jobson was standing, bowing to her, half-grave, half-smiling.

"My dear Miss Raymond! Where on earth have you dropped from?"

"Dropped from? Not down from the clouds, at all events, sir! I had to come *up* to get to London—all the way from Devonshire. I only got your letter yesterday at noon. I never was more astounded in my life. My case over—away—away by direction of my own attorney! And in my absence the whole of you have conspired together to arrange a settlement which is an outrage on justice, and an everlasting stain on my character. I can't tell you what I feel—I should like to tear all your eyes out! I could hardly sit still in the train." She was walking rapidly about the room. "I never heard of such a thing! And you—whom I trusted—to whom I confided the defence of my honour, you set your hand to the arrangement which leaves a slur on my good name which can never be wiped out. Oh! I really can't stand it, Mr. Jobson! I really can't *understand* it, Mr. Jobson!" cried Miss Raymond, with tears of passion in her eyes and her little feet stamping the ground.

"My dear Miss Raymond—"

"I am not your dear Miss Raymond! Henceforward, Mr. Jobson, I am 'Miss Raymond' at your service. You cannot be a true friend. Oh! dear—I have been dreadfully deceived!"

"Pray—*Miss* Raymond—if you wish me so to address

you—let me say a word—but first please sit down and hear what I have to say in self-defence.”

He wheeled a chair and she sat down. Jobson bethought him that he might divert her wrath for a moment from himself in another direction.

“Do I understand you to say,” he asked, “that Hawke and Shearer did not give you notice that the trial was coming on?”

“On the contrary, Mr. Jobson,” said the lady, “they told me I could safely go down to Devonshire for a week, and that they did not apprehend the cause could be reached before the middle of term, and that they would give me timely notice of its coming on. To-day I find this letter”—whipping it out of her pocket—“expressing their regret that the cause was put down higher in the list than they had expected before the sittings were begun, and that they had not been in a position to write me in time to enable me to be present—but that they were happy to say my presence had not been necessary, the distinguished counsel whom they had retained having been agreed that if a settlement could be arrived at on reasonable terms, it would be better to assent to it, rather than to enter into the long and painful enquiry which it would necessarily have entailed. Therefore, out of consideration for the character of the late Mr. Armathwaite, of the memory of the testatrix Miss Armathwaite, and my own painful position, they recommended an arrangement. And they, Hawke and Company, are happy to say that they were met in the handsomest manner on the other side, and in consideration of the plaintiffs withdrawing all reflections on me, their client, it had been arranged that all the costs of the plaintiffs as between attorney and client, should be paid out of the estate. Then a few formal words of congratulation which stick into my flesh like pins. What do you think of that, sir?”

“What I think of it, Miss Raymond,” said Thaddæus Jobson, “I should hardly like to put in words to you. The conduct of these solicitors is simply infamous. You ought, at least, to have been consulted.”

“But you were there, Mr. Jobson!” replied Miss Ray-

mond, her tone however becoming more gentle as she looked at Jobson's face, which was full of sympathy and regret.

"I was, Miss Raymond—but consider. I was only the junior; I was quite unaware of the trick you attorney had played you; in any case, I should, by all the rules of the bar, have been bound to acquiesce in the opinion of my leader. So deeply annoyed was I at the proposal to settle, that I even went out to look for you, and warn you of the danger—but, you see, you were, unhappily, away—kept away, I now see, on purpose."

"Well," she said, rising and holding out her hand, "I daresay you couldn't help it. Anyhow, I can't be angry with you."

Jobson took the hand, and gallantly pressed his lips upon it. Miss Raymond hastily withdrew the pretty temptation, and, with a blush, resumed her seat.

"I know all about it," she cried. "I suspected something of the sort would be tried. Bland and Smirke were Sir Glanville Marchmont's best clients, It is that old rascal Bland who has arranged this. He has been advising the other side. He was afraid I should show him up. Then those attorneys knew I should win the case, and wanted to get their costs. They had arranged it all between them beforehand, you may depend upon it. Oh! I *wish* I could have a few minutes with the Attorney-general! I'd tell him what I think of it! Was my reputation of no consequence, I wonder?"

Jobson thought to himself that Sir Glanville Marchmont would have had to pass a *mauvais quart d'heure*, if Miss Raymond could have had her wish, but he left his thoughts unexpressed.

"And now," she said, "I want to bring an action against Hawke and Shearer—I want you to move in Court for a new trial—I don't care about the expense. I have been shamefully wronged, and at any cost I must have an opportunity of vindicating myself in the witness-box."

She spoke with all the impetuous energy of outraged pride, of sincere conviction in the goodness and purity of her cause. And she had been wronged. There was no

question that the fatal arrangement so easily agreed to by the Attorney-general and Mr. Tubbs, had secured her a material success, at the expense of that which any true, high-minded woman values above every other consideration. But Jobson knew that the redress she sought was hopeless. It is a maxim of the law of England that *there is no wrong without a remedy*. Yet the injury done to Miss Raymond was absolutely beyond redress. Her own counsel, paid and instructed by her, even Jobson himself, had assented to a verdict which no proceedings could upset. To attempt to retrieve the position, would be only to incur ridicule, to create scandal, to increase still more the depth of the stain upon her character. The entire story of Miss Raymond was a salient example of the infirmity of human law—of the law and its practice in this highly civilised age of attorneys and counsel, of conventional justice and elaborate iniquity.

Of course it would have been of no use for Jobson to say this to Miss Raymond, in her then frame of mind. He endeavoured to calm her down. He promised carefully to consider the matter. He engaged her, on her part, not to take any steps whatever, without consulting him. He conducted her to the door, handed her into a cab, and was rewarded as she drove off with a beaming smile.

His own smile died away as he turned to the house and pondered over the mischances of honour and honesty.

CHAPTER LXIV.

THE DEAN AND BERTHA AS DIPLOMATISTS.

THE truth could no longer be withheld from Bertha Jobson. Christmas was coming, the husband would not be with the wife, the father would not be able to kiss his children with a merry wish. It was clear to Winnistoun and to Jobson that, unless a reconciliation could be effected, others in the wide circle of the friends of both families must get to hear of the estrangement which had taken place. To ease off the changes he was about to make in his mode of living, Jobson held on as usual in the house in Great Charles Street, intending, if it were sold, to give it up at Christmas. At the Deanery there was a discreet reticence, and the gossip world of a little cathedral city found no pretence for scandal in the natural suggestion that Mrs. Jobson was staying in the country for the benefit of the children's health.

The Dean, meantime, though well kept in hand by Mrs. Bromley, whose clear, strong mind enabled her to put her judgments in very decisive terms, was inwardly uncomfortable. His lady would have listened to none of the gentle suggestions which from time to time rose to his lips and trembled for utterance—but were never uttered. There was no use in blinking the matter to himself, he was afraid of her—and he esteemed her judgment above his own. Still he was cut to the heart by the state of things. He was troubled too—though he did not allow himself to nurse the feeling—by the coolness with which Sylvia and his wife accepted the situation. He would like to have seen his daughter less hard, even to an erring apostate.

Do what he would with his thoughts, turn them upside down, examine his own conscience, analyse his motives and theirs, fall back on Biblical principles or the Bishop's stern convictions—there was a little monitor within him which repeatedly arose and warned him that, if his present course of conduct were Christian, it was not humane, and his high-bred sense of honour suggested that it was ungenerous and unkind. So he suffered in silence and prayed in secret, and the more he prayed the more he suffered. The Bishop let him alone. Once only when Dr. Bromley seemed about to speak to his episcopal brother on the subject, the latter, suddenly catching up a copy of the *Athenæum* which lay on his study table, and pointing to an advertisement of a new edition of the *Quæstio Quæstionum*, said—

“You see, Bromley, *that* still goes on—it is most lamentable.”

“Yes,” replied the Dean, with a sigh, and he changed the subject.

At length he began to find that he could not retain himself any longer. The preparations for the joyous season of Christmas had already begun. Each Sunday morning as he opened the prayer-book, he was reminded that the day was one week nearer when every family in every Christian land would strive to be reunited in joy and sympathy. Unless some step were taken, Jobson and his wife and children would pass the happy season apart. The Dean's soul was troubled with this thought. It at last became so overpowering as even to drive out respect for Mrs. Bromley's infallible authority, and the Bishop's superior wisdom.

One day the Dean broke the ice with Sylvia. It was almost literally breaking the ice, so hard and frozen had her manner become in regard to all that concerned her husband. She had not mentioned him to her father for weeks. He was astonished that she expressed no regrets, concealed, if she felt, any chagrin or pity. Her cheek showed no pallor, her eyes were calm as glass. She moved about the house and in society as if nothing had happened. He did not understand that she was supported by the resentment of a

woman whose pride had been wounded to the core by one whom she felt to be her master. This it was that had turned her into stone. She never would forgive her husband till he had atoned for it.

The Dean found her sitting in the dining-room. Mrs. Bromley was away engaged in some district-visiting. Sylvia, with a cup of afternoon tea beside her, was reading a novel. One of the children was playing at the other end of the room. The Dean looked at her and at the child with a troubled heart. He would have liked to see her more anxious. He stroked her brown hair and asked if he might have a cup of tea. While he sat nursing the cup, and thinking how he should begin, a diversion he might have taken to be providential was made by little Etta. She ran up to her grandfather's knee :

"Grandpapa ! how long is it to Christmas now ?"

The Dean glanced at the child rather nervously, as if he suspected what was coming.

"Quite near now, my darling—only two more Sundays, and two days after that comes Christmas Day."

"I'm *so* glad," said the child, heaving a deep sigh.

"Why particularly?" said the Dean advisedly.

"O because you know, grandpapa, when papa went away, mamma said he would not come back till Christmas. And I want to see him ever so much, grandpapa. What is he doing so long away ?"

The bright curly head was at the Dean's knee and two earnest little blue-grey eyes were turned up toward his face, with just a slight film of sorrow over their brightness.

The Dean looked at Sylvia, who kept her eyes on the book. She thought she would leave her father to get out of the difficulty as well as he could.

"Papa is away in London attending to his work, Etta. I—I hope you may see him at Christmas ; you must ask mamma about that."

Sylvia, thus directly alluded to, looked at her father with a dash of anger in her face. The girl was gazing at her keenly.

"He will come, won't he, mamma ? You know, you said so."

Sylvia mastered herself and replied quietly : " I did not say, Etta, that papa would be here at Christmas, I said he would not be here *before* Christmas. He may be kept away in London ever so long. Run away now and play, and leave me alone with grandpapa."

" Sylvia," said the Dean as he returned from opening the door and seeing the little woman safe in a servant's hands, " what is to be done about this? What do you think, my dear? How long is this to go on?"

" What *can* be done?" she said almost fiercely. " So long as *he* remains in his present spirit what is to be done? He seems to be able to get on well enough without us. As for what I think—I don't think about it at all. I have, for the time at all events, dismissed the subject."

" But do you not think that some effort should be made to reach Jobson? I feel his conduct is not wholly to be defended—but really, Sylvia, this present position is getting intolerable. It is too horrible."

Sylvia slightly shrugged her shoulders.

" It is not our fault," she said coldly.

" Well," said the Dean heavily, " I heartily wish I could entirely go with your mother and you in that."

" You have doubts?" cried Sylvia astonished.

" I don't know," said the Dean. " I cannot say I have doubts—you know how I esteem your mother's opinion, and she is perfectly clear about it—but I don't feel happy at all. I would rather lean to the side of love and mercy—if—if—it were quite consistent with duty."

Sylvia, with her square brow and large eyes and determined mouth, was a formidable looking conscience to the poor Dean, who was gallantly trying to be charitable.

" But it isn't consistent with duty, sir! I thought you had acknowledged that long ago," said Mrs. Jobson with some of her mother's manner. " Jobson's conduct has been wicked and selfish. Look at the position he is in now. So far as I can make out, he is half-ruined, besides being tabooed from all Christian society. He has ruined *my* happiness," said Mrs. Jobson bitterly, " and here are his children asking for a father who never sees them. For my part I say I have no difficulty whatever. I will never stir a

step towards him. He must change his opinions and acknowledge his faults towards me before I will ever love him again."

She gradually grew vehement, and delivered the last words with passionate emphasis. The Dean however was gathering strength. Tirade was lost on him, and his faith in the impregnability of their position towards Jobson had been severely shaken.

"Hush, Sylvia!" he said, with some authority and solemnity in his manner and voice. "He is your husband, to whom in my presence you vowed at the altar your lasting love. You may differ in opinions, but he is entitled to your affection which I do not see that he has done anything to forfeit. He is true to you——"

"How do you know?" snapped out Mrs. Jobson.

"Why! Surely!—what do you mean? You have no ground whatever for thinking otherwise! Have you?"

"No," replied Sylvia, coolly. "But a man who can act as he has done towards me is capable of anything."

Dr. Bromley, now that he had entered into the matter, felt strengthened to go on with it, and did his best to turn Sylvia's thoughts into a more gentle channel, but the more he pressed her the stronger became the evidence that she was implacable. So much so, that she created a powerful revulsion in his mind.

He therefore resolved on a very bold step. Two days afterwards he announced that he was going up to London. He invented an excuse which the recording angel has, let us hope, omitted to register, and, arrived in the Metropolis, he immediately went to Pump Court. He and his son-in-law shook hands with the air of men who hardly wished to do it, but would have been ashamed to do otherwise. Both were greatly moved.

"How are the children?" said Taddy before the Dean could utter a word.

"Well, thank God!" said the Dean. "One of them has sent me here. They want to see you."

The Dean, had he cogitated for a week, could hardly have hit upon a happier way of opening this interview. He had touched the tenderest chord in Jobson's heart.

"Thank God! indeed, my dear Dean. Please sit down here by the fire, and tell me all about them." He shyly avoided mentioning Mamma Bromley and Sylvia.

"All are well—physically—my dear Jobson—but mentally and morally—you, we—all have gone wrong. In fact, Taddy Jobson, I am here to tell you solemnly that the present state of things is insupportable and cannot last, and I charge you to take some steps immediately to put an end to it. You are breaking my heart and making me unhappy," said the Dean, fairly giving way, "you and Sylvia between you—and unless you can do something to bring about a reconciliation, you will kill me."

If Mrs. Bromley had seen her husband at this moment she would have added one more to the many concrete and pointed examples of the weakness of man, of which she had so extended a catalogue.

Jobson, much agitated, hardly knew how to reply. Had the affair rested between him and the gentle, chivalrous soul before him, the reconciliation would have been a very simple matter. But behind the Dean he saw the shadows—or let us rather say, the very solid substance of Mrs. Bromley and his wife, and he knew they would repudiate the weakness of their natural leader.

"My dear father-in-law," he said with a voice that showed his feeling, "these are the sweetest words I have heard for many a day, and I know they come from a true heart. I too live in daily suffering from the existing state of things. My heart too is breaking. I am conscious of having done nothing to deserve the exile and sorrow I am now forced to endure. I was practically driven from your house and family——"

The Dean made a gesture of dissent. "But yes!" cried Jobson. "When the Bishop declined to meet me at the Deanery, and Mrs. Bromley and my wife, sir, informed me they entirely approved of his action—and Sylvia Jobson declined to come away with me, when sense of duty and respect to you and all concerned required me to leave, I was practically driven out alone. You did nothing, sir, to prevent it! You did not insist on my staying! You did not use your authority with your daughter to induce her to

avoid a breach and a scandal. As for her, she *cannot* love me. She is only deceiving her own heart when she supposes that duty enjoins her to treat me as she has done and is doing. Her words, her whole conduct are utterly irreconcilable with a sincere affection. She is, if I mistake not, encouraged by Mrs. Bromley. There is no step which I can take, consistently with my dignity and my conscience, which will satisfy either of them, even if your charity and kindness might stretch a point to receive me back again."

"*Dignity*, Taddy Jobson, may perhaps be overlooked in such a crisis, when your children's future is thrown into the balance, but *conscience* I should be the last to invite you to disregard. Are you quite sure that it is not pride rather than conscience which is dominating at this moment?"

"Alas! no! my dear Dean. I would it were so, and I would throw at your feet all my own feelings. The least that Sylvia would accept from me would be that I should begin by expressing my sorrow that I had written a book of which I am not ashamed and which I am ready to defend—that I should humiliate myself so far as to confess to her that I have been a wicked, foolish, and irrational person—that I should do this, conscious at the same time that whatever I did would not remove—nay would rather help to intensify—the feeling of scorn, pity, contempt—whatever you may like to call it, with which she has of late come to regard me. I understand Sylvia perfectly. If she really had any love for me she could not have acted as she has done. She is too high-minded to be faithless to her vows—but she is proud and severe. She has formed an opinion of me which is depreciatory. In fine she half despises me—half hates me—and the only terms of reconciliation possible for her are impossible for me."

Jobson spoke with vigour and bitterness. The Dean's face grew longer as he listened. He knew how much truth there was in Jobson's words; he could even feel some secret sympathy deep down in his heart for Jobson's position.

Doctor Bromley gazed at Jobson with a sad and puzzled air. He was little of a diplomatist, very much of a Christian and a gentleman. Naturally acute, he owned that he had

no just reply to make to his son-in-law's statement. Reverent in his respect for his Bishop, he could not help recalling at this moment that it was the episcopal interference which had raised this dreadful question in his family, a question which it now seemed must inevitably end in scandal. Altogether he was completely stranded, and helpless. Jobson was stronger than he—Mrs. Bromley and her daughter were ever so much stronger. What could he do between them all?

He humbly expressed his ineptitude.

"My dear Taddy, I trust to your honour to hold this sacred between us. I own that you have not been kindly treated. Sylvia is uncompromising to a degree—always was—though she is a dear, good creature, you know—very like her mamma—a little *too* sensible and decided perhaps. They have got it into their heads that you have behaved very badly and foolishly—and how to get it out again I don't know—unless there should be some special dispensation of Divine providence. Christmas is coming, my dear boy, the season of love and kindness. Your children are longing to see you—come down—come down, and see them and Sylvia—and make it up. Come down at my invitation," said the Dean waxing very bold, in full memory of the terrible Mamma Bromley, "I cannot let things go on in this way any longer. I will manage it. It must be arranged."

"My dear Dean," replied Jobson, "if anything would tempt me to try the impossible your generous words would do it. But I should be doing you a great injustice, and only increasing the confusion, were I to take advantage of them. You would find yourself again in an utterly impracticable position. Had you been able to bring me some kind message—some indication that there was a softening of feeling on the part of Sylvia or her mother, I would have risked a great deal to bring about a return of the old, happy state of things. But I judge, from what you say, they are as inflexible as ever; I should have to go down on my knees to them—and say what I cannot honestly say—and even then with little hope of arriving at that perfect understanding which is the basis of love. I am sure when you reflect on it you will see I am right. But the step you have

taken towards me, is infinitely kind, and touches me deeply. I shall be ever grateful for it. It is some comfort to me that there is a friend who loves us all equally, who is watching over Sylvia, and waiting for any signs of improved feeling. This you can do. For the present there is nothing else to be done except to wait and hope."

The Dean could scarcely reply. His mobile nature was depressed by the failure of his mission, which he now saw had been a hopeless one from the beginning. He pressed Jobson's hand warmly, muttered a few words of incoherent hope and benediction, and left the house, carrying away a heavy heart, not more heavy though than the one he left behind him. It seemed to Jobson as if, with the Dean, was carried away the last chance of a reconciliation.

He went to dine with his aunt, and told her the whole story. With what she knew already she was quite prepared to understand it all. Her opinion of Sylvia had been gradually forming, in a mind which was as candid as it was generous, and consequently when conviction was arrived at, it had a precision and definitiveness which left no opening for doubt. In this way it sometimes happens that the judgments of the gentlest are more hard and immovable than those of harsher natures. Still the prevalent feeling in Bertha's mind was grief. She felt a pain in admitting that a character she had once respected was unworthy of it—more pain indeed than indignation. If sight of Taddy's suffering grieved her, the sense of the frightfulness of such a catastrophe as a prolonged separation, with all the comment of outside gossips and newspaper satirists, was simply appalling. And sympathising with her nephew would not afford him much relief. The peril was imminent. Some effort must at once be made to avert it. She agreed that it was impossible for him to make any move. A council of war was held with Winnistoun, and Jobson, against his will, consented to allow his aunt to go down and see the Bromleys. It was a brave thing for the gentle woman to undertake. Bertha felt that she was not a fair match for Mrs. Bromley and Sylvia, but love gave her strength. She would have gone through fire and water for her nephew. And she said nothing of her fears. She wrote to Mrs. Bromley

that she was coming down to pay a visit to Taddy's children and to bring them some Christmas presents. Only a barbarian could have taken exception to so natural an action, and when she arrived, a few hours after her letter, the Dean was waiting for her at the station with a pony-carriage. He had craftily managed to be his own driver. For a man of his open disposition, the part he had to play was a difficult one. It involved almost a treason to his wife, the sovereign of his home. He tried to convince himself that she was right from her point of view, but he could not help thinking that from other points of view there might be a less uncompromising attitude which, without infringing any principle, would lean to the side of that charity which hopeth, endureth, all things—and "never faileth," except when religious prejudice intervenes to say that it ought not to be exhibited. He himself felt he could love a good many people with whom he did not agree. Taddy ought frankly to be told that he was a very naughty boy, but it was not necessary to force him on his knees and break down his self-esteem. He managed cunningly to convey to Bertha two or three hints, broad enough for her to understand, but not sufficiently defined to constitute an overt act of conjugal infidelity.

Mrs. Bromley's reception was all that in the circumstances could be expected of a naturally noble and refined woman; Sylvia's pale face a trifle colder, words having passed between the two women before. The children were delighted to see their grand-aunt, enthusiastic when they saw her pretty gifts, but their preoccupation was touchingly revealed when, after hastily expressing their delight, they suddenly turned and asked "where papa was and why he did not come too?" Bertha fairly ran away to hide her tears, and the Dean discreetly retreated to his study.

Mrs. Bromley's heart was touched by this little scene, and she presently followed Bertha to her room.

"I don't wonder you feel it, dear," she said. "It is enough to break all our hearts. Poor Sylvia—you can fancy what she suffers."

"I *knew* what *he* suffers," replied Bertha Jobson, with

emphasis, "and it seems to me, Mrs. Bromley, that, if there is any suffering at all, it is wholly unnecessary."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Bromley. "It is a pity that people think so seldom of the consequences of their own actions. How much sorrow could be saved to the world if people would only reflect before they commit a folly!"

Her tone was far from ungentle, but she spoke with the conviction with which some people manage to give solemnity to the utterance of commonplaces. Bertha Jobson managed to restrain herself. She did not reply.

"How is he in health?" inquired the elder lady, kindly. "How does he bear this unfortunate business with Coxon?"

"Mrs. Bromley," said Miss Jobson, "he is looking worn and ill. The grey hairs are fast increasing. His mind is evidently distressed. He feels the want of the sympathy, the love, the home life, which he cherished so much. He misses the voices of his children—and the care of his wife. I can hardly tell you what I fear for him. If you saw him you would pity him, and if you are in any way responsible for prolonging the present state of things, if you have any influence with Sylvia, I entreat you as a woman, as a Christian, to endeavour to bring about a reconciliation."

Mrs. Bromley was not unmoved by this appeal, but she *was* greatly responsible for this state of things, and Bertha's words in reminding her of this, also recalled to her that she had taken up her line deliberately—after due reflection, upon principle, and nothing had since occurred to change her opinion.

"It is indeed terrible, Miss Jobson; but who is the author of the difficulty? And who is perpetuating it? I have reason to know that your nephew, when by his ill-advised action he had put us all here in a most painful position, adopted with my daughter a most unhappy and uncompromising tone in regard to it. Indeed, it was not possible for a woman, who had any self-respect, to endure his language and manner. Nor do I see how a woman with any self-respect—and Sylvia is a girl of a very decided character—could, even with a man she loved, consent to act as if nothing had happened, and go back to him like a

penitent, when she is really the one who has been wronged and has suffered."

"Did she say nothing to him, Mrs. Bromley?" cried Bertha, indignant. "Has she told you, I wonder, the whole story? Did she appeal to him in a loving and kindly way, or did she rate him like a schoolboy? Do you suppose that a man of Taddy Jobson's power and position, would allow *any* woman to adopt towards him the contemptuous tone that Sylvia did—or yield his judgment on a matter of great importance, when he had conscientiously considered it, to the angry sneers of a woman because she is his wife?"

"And why not, Miss Jobson?" said Mrs. Bromley, now upon her own ground. "Men—as I know indeed by experience—are not infallible, and may do worse than be governed by the counsel of a sensible wife. Sylvia is a very sensible woman, and in my opinion Jobson would have done a good deal better had he listened to her with a little more consideration. I know what she feels. She feels that her husband does not thoroughly respect her, and she cannot be affectionate to a man who shows her that."

"Forgive me—that is really not so, Mrs. Jobson," said Bertha Jobson, who however began to see that she was engaged on a hopeless mission. "I am certain that Taddy respects his wife's judgment. He has a sincere affection for her, esteems her opinion far above the ordinary, but it does not follow that he is always to agree with her. Besides, if someone has to give way, she ought—it is a woman's duty."

"I really cannot agree with you in *that*, Miss Jobson," said Mrs. Bromley promptly and decidedly. "Women have been and are underestimated. A woman is what she makes herself. A husband has no superiority simply because he is a husband. Very often he is a fool. Generally he is feeble. What is a woman to do in that case? I don't say it of Jobson, mind. We all admire him for his talents. He is really a superior man—but his judgment may be at fault, and then his wife may step in and help him. And I don't think he does justice to Sylvia's good sense. At all events he has committed an unpardonable fault in his recent attack on religion."

"He has not attacked religion, Mrs. Bromley. You don't understand him."

"Well—there—dear—we shall never agree about that, so we had better stop. It was ever so kind of you to come down. I am sure you wanted to try and heal the breach. But I'm certain Sylvia will never give way till Jobson gives some indication of a change of views."

This was evidently all that was to be got out of Mrs. Bromley or her daughter. The Dean drove Bertha back to the station. He was much depressed. He did not like to say what he felt. When he put Bertha into the train, he pressed her hand. His eyes were glistening.

"Patience," he said, wearily. "Time is a great healer of griefs."

"O Dean! but what if we should not all last long enough! Good-bye!"

CHAPTER LXV

THE AMENITIES OF POLITICAL JOURNALISM.

PARLIAMENT was summoned to meet late in February, and the town was rapidly filling up. A series of Cabinet meetings, followed by the usual rumours in the clubs, and conjectural statements in the newspapers, prepared the way for the opening of the annual tournament of parties. The Tory Ministry, which had now been in power for eighteen months, was not looking forward to the Queen's Speech with that cheerfulness of hope which becomes a party of contentment. They had made too many mistakes in their policy, foreign and domestic, to be able to set a national dainty dish either before the Queen or the people. The Scio expedition had failed; there were symptoms of a coming war in the East; the Foreign Secretary had distinguished himself more by bluster than action—and the English people have always loved much of the one, and little of the other. At home, the condition of the working classes was causing to all the "propertied" people—generally styled the "friends of law and order"—the greatest anxiety. For a long time in English history the few who possess the wealth have been at the mercy, if they only knew it, of the many who have none; and through the lack of intelligence and of combination in the latter, have managed to keep skirting the edge of the whirlpool—revolution. The "upper classes" have found themselves much in the position of Prince Rudolph of the "Mysteries of Paris," in the cellar in the Champs Elysées, when he first felt the water wetting the soles of his feet, then reaching to his ankles, then creeping by degrees higher up his calf till it reached the knee, and so rising surely and implacably higher and higher, until

it arrived at his mouth, and he was wholly submerged. Happy are they that the rise is gradual, and leaves time to consider of ways of escape. The Tories were then, as ever, engaged in the needful, but hopeless, occupation of trying to stem the rising of the tide. Impossible economic conditions were demanding prompt remedial action—or could only be postponed by an extensive and bloody repression—and by good luck and the solid good sense of the English people, it has long happened that this alternative shall not even be contemplated in practical politics, until every other possible remedy shall have been tried and found useless. A crisis of this sort had arisen, the democracy was discontented and really suffering—it demanded greater potency, a larger and more forcible representation, a relief from burdens which it could not carry, however easily they were borne by those in better circumstances. War costs, a heavy tariff, costly administration of justice, governments by and for the “better classes,” all the usual concomitants of Tory administration, had with great rapidity roused the country against the existing Ministry, and it was felt that the end of their rule was nigh. As usual it was the party called “radical” which carried on the war, found and used the arguments, attacked the Ministry at the very base of its position.

Then the Whigs, who had been calmly regarding the struggle, until they saw how the fortunes of war were going, coolly came forward, assumed the leadership, and went in for the plunder. This has been the rough history of the past fifty years. Whenever a Liberal Government has come into power, borne in on the strong shoulders of a radical advance, places, rewards, honours, everything that party government gives to the victors, has been appropriated to the Whigs. While their yeomen have had to be content with the glory of having fought for principle, they have enjoyed the substantial rewards of place and power.

Jobson, with all his sorrow, domestic, financial, and professional, was still alive to his political duties. He went down to Linchester, a short time before Christmas, and delivered one of those keen trenchant reviews of the Government policy which, from the justice and keenness of their

criticism and the felicity of their form, strike the popular fancy. It is a singular thing that men who are worried by personal difficulties are often excited to a pitch of unnatural force in their public performances. Many an eloquent speech which charms the popular ear, many a nervous argument that carries away the popular feeling, comes from a mind tortured by anxieties and a heart bleeding at the core. When Jobson met his political friends in the club in Pall Mall, a few days before the opening of Parliament, it was to receive their congratulations, and to hear predictions on every side that, in the expected triumph of the party, his services were assured a substantial recognition. Lord Swallowtail, who had long kept out of Jobson's way, ventured to speak to him, and he was invited to meet Lord Mewbourne at the table of an ambitious Queen's Counsel who had in his eye one of the legal offices about to become vacant. The peer noticed Jobson with some affability. In the debate on the Address, when a general onslaught along the line had been ordered from headquarters, the Whigs invited our hero to take a prominent part. His name was handed in to the Speaker, and he was selected over a dozen competitors to address the House at a favourable hour. In an effective impromptu, he demolished the speech of the Irish Solicitor-general of the Ministry. The opinion in the lobbies was that it would not be possible for the incoming Administration to overlook his claims.

That which had been foreseen happened. The Ministers were defeated on the Address. Mr. Percival Peebles, Lord Mewbourne's Foreign Secretary and the most considerable man of the party in point of ability and eloquence, became Prime Minister, Lord Mewbourne contenting himself with the Colonies. Lord Swallowtail was taken in as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and at the Board of Trade a new Minister was found in Mr. Childerley. All the delightful family arrangements for which the Whigs are so conspicuous were ingeniously carried into effect; and the Prime Minister then began to look about for some from the rank and file of the party to satisfy the popular feeling. The law offices of the Crown are perforce selected for other than family reasons, and it was rumoured that Jobson was

to be Solicitor-general. This was an immense elevation for a man so young—as men in their forties are still esteemed in England, but he was too powerful from his writings and speeches outside the House, and too independent within to be left entirely out of consideration; and, although his professional position scarcely warranted his appointment, party exigencies were severe enough to make it at least defensible. The *Chronicle* published his name in the list of the Administration. It was, as we have seen, the paper for which he had been accustomed to write, and his kindest friends immediately said that he had caused this to be inserted, in order to bring himself to the notice of the Prime Minister. This however was not necessary. Mr. Peebles had fixed his eye on Jobson—and resolved to bring him within that sacred circle where a young man's mouth is shut and his independence stifled.

No sooner had the *Chronicle* mentioned Mr. Jobson's name, than the *Post* broke silence.

It said, after alluding to the composition of the New Ministry :—"Among other rumours, which obviously have no foundation, is one that Mr. Thaddæus Jobson, the well-known radical barrister, is to have the post of Solicitor-general. At the same time it is mentioned that, if the Premier were to make this appointment, the new Lord Chancellor, who is a sincere evangelical churchman, will inevitably resign. It is scarcely credible that a Minister of the sagacity of Mr. Peebles would, even to satisfy the demands of the insatiable radical clique, appoint to the important post of a law officer of the Crown—who may be said to be in a certain sense one of the under-keepers of the Queen's conscience—a gentleman who has written a most scandalous book, outraging every Christian feeling, and rivalling the worst scurrilities of Voltaire and Tom Paine. The country has not yet sunk to this depth, that it should remain indifferent to the interests and the dignity of our holy religion. But it is hinted, we know not with what truth, that there are other objections to Mr. Jobson's appointment—objections of a most delicate family and financial nature. We do not reproduce these rumours, which point to circumstances in relation to the female

defendant in a recent notorious will-case, to the winding up of a large business in the Potteries and the enforced absense of a partner in America. These may be only rumours, but their existence alone must make it very difficult for the Prime Minister to carry out the design attributed to him in regard to the honourable member for Linchester."

Now the above precious paragraph had been the result of a midnight visit paid to the inner editorial sanctuary of the *Post** by Mr. Tom Skirrow, who still remained connected with that organ of truth and light. He found the editor in his room, surrounded by proofs, glancing over the reports, dropping a word now and then to two or three gentlemen who sat or lounged about, come to hear the latest news and dispense the latest gossip.

Mr. Bakewell Pump, M.P., was there, with his white, soft, dough-like face, lightened by a sickly smile, and with a voice which rarely rose much above a whisper. He was the most invaluable gossip-retriever that ever was employed in a newsman's office. He had an infallible memory for all he heard—a gentle insinuating manner, which was so feeble as to excite many men's disgust, but so appealing as to win many men's confidences. His eminent receptivity made him an agreeable companion to the gossips, who love a good listener, and embrace a man that never tries to pull away his buttonhole from betwixt their thumb and finger. He had that fine art of the Boswellian race of piquing the person he wanted to pump, in such a manner that something should inevitably come out. He had only just a moment before seen someone (of importance) who had told him something which he could not credit, but which he would impart in strict confidence to his present friend, whose opinion on the probability or the improbability of the intelligence he forthwith proceeded to invite. Then Mr. Bakewell Pump, M.P., passed from one man to another in the lobbies, on the benches, at the Carlton and White's, eternally listening—everlastingly talking—perpetually comparing—pumping in and pumping out—and in the evening,

* *Not*, of course, the sedate and gentlemanly journal of the year 1882.—O, my reader!

passing into the editorial room of his friend Mr. Sackville Vernon of the *Post*, he blew off like a whale who had come up for air, and then he plunged away again into the deep sea of society and politics to suck in the floating *animalcule* of news.

It is one of the curiosities of life how men like this, of mediocre abilities, an indifferent wit, an unimpressive manner, manage to acquire the confidence of able men, and wire out of them secrets which they will not disclose to more intelligent persons. One can only explain it by supposing that mediocrity can pose for wisdom more readily than talent. The clever man is sure to say something which leads another clever man to question his judgment; your mediocrity rarely says anything sufficiently salient to attract attention, and so passes for a generally sensible person. He is astute enough to be two or three degrees above a fool, and not so silly as to challenge the field with a wit. Thus he is spoken of, even by some adequate judgments, as a "good all-round man," and "an agreeable person." The elbows of an active genius will stick into other people's ribs, but a fleshy mediocrity will push its way through society without giving any displeasing impression by its contact.

As all the higher posts of the Government had been by this time fixed, the whole interest of the moment centred in the nominations to the junior offices. And, in regard to these, Mr. Bakewell Pump had gathered, from his evening's work, that it was the disposition of the Premier to throw a sop to the Radicals, by letting one or two men into the subordinate places. The duty of a party which cannot make a Ministry of its own is to mar, as far as can be, the Ministry of the other party. It was very important for the Opposition that this sop should not be thrown to the Radicals, who would, if overlooked, be discontented, and probably breed dissension in the Ministerial ranks.

Jobson thus became what is graphically termed "a bone of contention."

"I met Lord Swallowtail to-night," said Mr. Bakewell Pump, "and he says Jobson is to get the Solicitor-generalship, though the Lord Chancellor is dead against it, because

in evangelical circles, you know, Jobson is regarded pretty much as a heathen. He is an excessively able fellow all the same—made a splendid speech the other night—and will add great strength to the Ministry. Indeed, last night the Duke told me he positively regarded him as one of the ablest and most dangerous men in the other party. Say what you like, devilish clever book, that last one of his; though it does show up the goody-goody lot rather severely. Cainham says his accession to the Government will be a weakness from one point of view, but he has talent enough to outweigh all that, and we ought to try our best to keep him out. Lady Cainham is a terrible enemy of his—and so is that fat French mother of hers—the De Lossy. Some old scandal they say. Can't you find out something about him, Vernon? I have heard rumours. Was told the other day that he has lost a lot of money, and that he got mixed up with something queer in the case of that girl Raymond, about old Armathwaite's will. I remember now—it was Glanville Marchmont who gave me a hint of it. He said it was a good joke. Jobson was quite for fighting her case, you know, to clear her character."

"Here is someone who can tell us all about it," replied Mr. Vernon, as Mr. Skirrow entered the room. "You know about Mr. Jobson, Skirrow?"

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Skirrow, whose position in relation to the paper did not give him any encouragement to be bumptious with its editor. "I know a good deal about him. I came on purpose to give you some information, as I see he is mentioned for the Solicitor-generalship. You might make a very effective protest."

Mr. Bakewell Pump, M.P., was curiously examining Skirrow's ugly face and vulgar appearance through his eyeglass. He gave an encouraging nod when he heard Skirrow's answer.

Then Mr. Skirrow detailed all he knew about Jobson's doings, the scandal about a foreign lady at Childs' Bank, Miss Raymond's visit to Pump Court, the failure of the Coxon business.

"And," he added, smacking his lips and smiling, "I think I'm going to send him a surprise before long, that

will oblige him to throw up the sponge, for all his stuck-up pride and rich relations."

Mr. Bakewell Pump was amused by Skirrow's words—though he internally felt a little repulsion to this vulgar fellow.

Mr. Skirrow would not be more specific on the last points. He went into another room and soon returned with a nice specimen of party comment which we have above reprinted from the columns of the journal.

"Useful sort of fellow that, I daresay," said Mr. Bakewell Pump, as Skirrow retired, and he himself having taken his hat, dropped the eyeglass out of his eye. "But I should keep him in the background, Vernon: he ain't a beauty, and, by Jove, I don't know whether I should be most afraid of his hating me, or taking a fancy to me—hey? he! he!" And, pleased with this little *met*, Mr. Bakewell Pump buttoned up his coat and took his departure, his doughy face still brightened with the enjoyment of his own humour.

CHAPTER LXVI.

NATURAL SELECTION—IN POLITICS.

ALMOST at the same hour when the dastard and injurious sentences were being penned in the room of the editor of the *Post*, three persons, sitting in the library of Mr. Peebles, in Grosvenor Street, were canvassing the appointments to the junior offices in the Administration. In Arlington Street, not so far away, were gathered Jobson, his aunt, and Winnistoun, hoping to receive some definite news from the Minister.

An Attorney-general had been nominated. Mr. Quintin Maddison, Q.C., the Chancery barrister and sound Whig, who had so wisely dined the Ministers at the right moment, had already accepted the Premier's offer. For the second law-officer Mr. Peebles had fixed upon Thaddæus Jobson. The Whip, Mr. Bateman, was with the Minister. The third person was Mr. Childerley.

"Jobson is very strong," said the Whip. "His appointment would, on the whole, be popular—the only drawback is that confounded book which has hit the Church people and the Evangelicals so hard. Mr. Pious Minton says the Methodists won't like it at all."

"Oh! we shall soon get over that!" said the Premier. "People forgive a good deal to a really brilliant man. Look at the number of good Churchmen who think Benoni is a chosen vessel."

"I agree with you," said the Patronage Secretary, "that the book alone is not fatal to Jobson's claims, but, besides that, there is some curiously unpleasant gossip about. They tell queer stories against him at the Bar. Someone was saying to-night, at Brooks's, that he had quarrelled with his wife's family. And then, again, his name is mixed up with that young lady's in the Armathwaite case. I don't, of

course, believe in anything serious—but it's unpleasant. Nevertheless, I think we ought to secure him. He's a formidable fellow when he breaks out."

"I am not quite sure about it," said Mr. Childerley. I have every reason to wish well to Jobson. He was at one time very intimate with my family. I had a great esteem for him—indeed, I have still. I may, between ourselves, confide to you that I once thought of him for my son-in-law. He saved my daughter's life in Rome—very gallantly—quite heroically. Well, it unexpectedly came to my knowledge—I am bound to say first through an anonymous letter—that Jobson had some suspicious relations with a foreign woman of very doubtful reputation. If I remember rightly she received a considerable sum of money from him. I satisfied myself of the correctness of the information by a confidential enquiry at his bankers'—intimate friends of mine—and I was obliged with reluctance to break it off. It was fortunate, since it has given me a son-in-law of whom I have every reason to be proud."

"It is strange," said Mr. Peebles. "He has had the repute of being a more than ordinarily serious man. One never expected to find him riding over the ropes. If there really are any compromising rumours about, it would be extremely injurious for us to take him up at this particular juncture. We must not run the least risk of annoying the Evangelicals and Dissenters. I think we ought to sleep over this. You had better make enquiries to-morrow morning, Bateman. Failing Jobson, we must take Ingledew—a poor substitute for so good a man, hardly clever enough, indeed, to imperil his own reputation. I don't suppose, Mr. Childerley, that the matter you refer to ever went beyond a very limited circle?"

"No, I think not," replied Mr. Childerley. "I never could find out who the person was to whom I was indebted for the information. I never heard it alluded to elsewhere, and I never disclosed what I have just related to you to anyone but Swallowtail, after he had married my daughter. He knew Jobson intimately, and declared he believed it to be capable of explanation. But of course it was too late to reopen the subject."

Mr. Childerley, who had thus let out the secret reason of his mysterious conduct towards Jobson, was plainly not conscious that he had behaved in any other than a discreet and honourable manner. True, he had not invited Jobson to offer any explanation of the circumstances which seemed to be so compromising; and, no doubt, it would have been difficult for him to find a pretext for demanding such an explanation, since there had never been, on the part of Jobson, any formal declaration of regard for Miss Childerley. Lord Swallowtail found his mouth closed by his marriage, and he had an uncomfortable feeling that Jobson had been unjustly treated, though it did not seem possible to take any step to set matters right, without making them more embarrassing than ever.

The other trio, in Arlington Street, had discussed with animation the prospect of Jobson's advancement. With the innocent hopefulness of affection they triumphed in an incomplete success; they imagined the delight of Sir Arthur Jobson and his wife to hear that a third Jobson had been knighted, a wonderful thing considering the difference in the circumstances of the various persons thus honoured, though not so unique a fact in the history of our energetic English families. They discussed ways and means, and Bertha Jobson again offered to make any sacrifice to assure Taddy's success. In the luminous glow of their own happy feelings, the cloud over Jobson's life vanished, or grew aureate with hope. Bertha and Winnistoun whispered to each other that possibly this great distinction might satisfy Sylvia's pride and lead to a reconciliation. They invented a thousand excuses for the Minister's delay in announcing a foregone conclusion. Bertha had received two or three visits that afternoon from well-informed persons, congratulating her on her nephew's promotion. Winnistoun had heard it everywhere taken for granted. Jobson had been congratulated fifty times over at the Reform Club. When they parted, it was to dream of to-morrow's good fortune, and the white stones which were to mark that lucky day were already turning in their pockets.

* * * * *

When he reached his bedroom, Jobson stood for a minute

or two musing before the picture of his boy, which hung upon the wall. Had he glanced for a moment into the mirror on his left, he would have been startled by the pallid image therein presented. His eye was dimmed as he studied the bright little features before him, with the mother's eyes and mouth, and the father's fine, full head, reproduced under a fleece of golden curls.

"This will be a triumph for *him*," thought Jobson, "though he cannot know it now. He is not likely to inherit much in lands and money, but he will reap some of the honours of this distinction, and of all others yet to follow."

There was pride and hope in the thought. His lips drew firmly together, and his eyes dilated. Much done, much yet to be done, by a brave heart, wounded now and halting, but never owning itself beaten—faint yet pursuing. *Vix major!* Where are now the *vires minores*? Unconquered still—and still active! He did not glance over his left shoulder at the mirror, where there was a reflection of a ghastly face—he did not look—or had he looked he would not have seen a shadow standing between, that might have been the shadow of death.

"Sylvia," he went on thinking, as he turned from the picture, "Sylvia may perhaps be moved by this. She is ambitious. She will be 'Lady Jobson.' She must come home again; possibly she will understand me better."

A rush of thoughts, kindly and loving for Sylvia, went through his brain. If she only knew him! If she could sound the full depths of his love, the pure clear spring of his conscience, the sincerity and earnestness of his nature! If she could only appreciate and sympathise with the wants of that nature, its noble ambition, its zest for work and glory, and yet its deep reverent humility in face of the divine mysteries and of human duty—she could not wound him as she had done.

So to bed! where strong ambition tired with exertion folds its wings and abject weakness only continues through the night the fidgety slumbers of day.

He woke up in the morning unrefreshed by his repose. While physical fatigue had shut his eyelids, his mind had not slept. It seemed as if he had been thinking hard in the silent hours. He came back to conscious life equally weary

and excited. Through the fevered brain rattled quick, unmanageable thoughts. Over and over again, and strangely mingled together, there seemed to return the various subjects of anxiety with which this crisis of his life was charged. Now he was thinking of Sylvia, the Dean, Mrs. Bromley, the Bishop, the children, Coxon, the Solicitor-generalship—past, present, and future, confused in the lightning rapidity of mental action.

Cooling brain and body by a plunge in his bath, Jobson descended to breakfast. He tried to force his appetite, for a strong man does not like to feel that his body is the slave of his anxieties. Meanwhile, his eye rapidly scanned the columns headed "The New Ministry:" in the *Times* and *Chronicle*. Mention was again made of him in both journals as the certain nominee for the Solicitor-generalship. Hope confirmed made him strong. He was gratified by the way in which they spoke of the appointment; the sort of left-handed compliment, nevertheless, which journalistic mediocrity grudgingly pays to incontestable talent:—

"Mr. Jobson is a man who has committed many grave faults of political judgment, and who has grievously sinned in respect of his literary form, but who is, beyond doubt, a man of conspicuous ability and no small popularity. The Minister could hardly afford to overlook one who," &c. &c.

This was at all events satisfying to his pride, however unwilling a testimony to his powers. Yet, as the hours stole on, Jobson could not help glancing at the hands of the clock, and wondering why he received no note from Mr. Peebles, or the useful Mr. Bateman. When the hands pointed to nearly eleven, he felt ashamed to wait any longer. and yet, till his fate was decided, he was not inclined to go to his work. He called in Arlington Street.

His aunt looked pale and troubled. She had evidently expected him.

"Well," she said, anxiously, as she kissed him, "what do you think of it? Isn't it scandalous?"

"What do you mean?"

She silently handed him the *Post*, the first paper she always read. He glanced over the column she pointed out to him, and the blood of honest indignation mounted to his

cheeks. To cut any man down to the quick, there is no knife more keen than that of a scandal which touches his honour. All the more wounding and painful is it to have the probity of character or life challenged, when the conscience is pure, and the life clear and flawless as a diamond. To read this vile attack in the presence of Bertha Jobson, who was the impersonation of virgin purity, was to suffer tenfold. It was horrible to know that her eyes had travelled over the polluted page, that her clear, loving soul had been sullied for a moment by the passing suggestions of this libel. This is one of the penalties of a refined organisation—to feel more keenly the most unjust aspersions because they have been communicated to those whom one esteems and loves. To such organisations the certainty that one's friends will never credit the scandal has nothing to do with it; the mere fact that the thing has been said is an anguish.

Bertha Jobson hardly liked to speak. The topics so invidiously hinted at were of the kind from which her nature revolted. Even had there been a foundation for them, only a low, coarse, depraved mind could have retailed them to the public. The higher natures shrink from discussing even scandals that are true; out of a reverence for humanity, out of a noble regard for the dignity of society, out of a charity for men's weakness. There are persons again who will speak freely of their friends' peccadillos in private conversation who are horrified to see them mentioned in print. Were a "gentleman" of any pretensions to make a public speech containing the sort of allusions of which this paragraph was full, he would be put into Coventry, even in a racing club, and would run the chance of being kicked by the nearest honest person. And properly. Society is getting, or gone, utterly rotten, when men are prurient to know and to chatter about each others' faults and frailties; and it is not seldom to be noted that those who set themselves to satisfy this morbid pruriency are persons whose own lives are bywords for profligacy. No doubt, if my neighbour comes home every night with a different Anonyma, it is very scandalous and regrettable; but it is infinitely more scandalous for me, the posing purist, to go and tell every-

one I know what my neighbour's life is. I assist in dispersing, like a bad odour, the evil of this particular life over a large field, and in doing so, I do nothing whatever for the cause of decency and morality.

In the present case, Tom Skirrow was only able to fancy the worst of the inadvertences in Jobson's life, because Tom Skirrow knew so well what he, Skirrow, would have done, or tried to do, in the same circumstances. And so he wrote his history as if it were veracious. There seemed to be evidence against Jobson, and in reality there was perfect innocence. Why it should be considered less infamous to pen such things, to pen them anonymously and sell them for some dirty stivers to a newspaper editor, and for him to print and issue them to the world, than it would be to utter the same things at a public meeting or in the House of Parliament or in Convocation—Heaven forgive the supposition!—I know not. But it is certain that you meet every day in your club persons, accepted there as "gentlemen," who are known to all the world to earn a livelihood by retailing private scurrilities for public amusement. And yet there is no pillory for the ears of these knaves. I say not a word against the sharpest legitimate satire, which, being honourable and honest, is the very salt of society—a healthy antiseptic.

Jobson could scarcely look his aunt in the face. On her part, Bertha had a noble shame about saying to her dear boy, "I don't believe it." To say so would pain him. What she did was this:—She leaned over and kissed him sitting in the chair where he had dropped. He was getting sadly weaker from his troubles.

"Taddy, something tells me this will injure your chances. It is so wicked and so plausible."

Jobson returned the kiss, and affected a laugh, which sounded strangely hollow.

"Pshaw! Dearest aunt, this is nothing. Sensible men are not affected by such frothy stuff as this."

"Ordinarily, no. But again, what if Sylvia or Mrs. Bromley should see this paragraph?"

Jobson flushed up hotly. This thought had passed through his own mind. In their present temper, those two ladies

would be only too ready to believe in the scandal. The vista of unpleasantness which this opened up seemed interminable.

"Do you think it will have any influence on Mr. Peebles?" added Bertha.

"I should think not!" replied Jobson, with some heat. "If he could be influenced by such a thing as that he wouldn't be worth an honest man's regard."

An honest man is always perfectly sincere in making such a remark as this, although, were he to place himself in the position of the person he criticises, he would probably find that he could not but have acted as that person had done. It is the worst of political life that it does not allow a man to act freely from his own impulse or judgment. A statesman who did not study the conveniences would not be a statesman. It is sometimes part of his duty—so complicated are the ethics of government—to study them, to do that which seems least best in order to arrive at that which is better.

Some quick appreciation of this flashed upon Miss Jobson. She said:

"May he not be obliged to look at it from a public point of view?"

"Let him!" replied Jobson grimly. He rose and strode about the room, his brow knitted, and his face working. "*I could* make him pay for it,—but then, again, how *could* I? How could I be guilty, in my position, of the meanness of revenging a personal slight by turning round on the leaders of my own party? The fact is—one may as well admit it—an honourable man oftens stands disarmed in public life, while a dishonest man bristles with weapons. Sercombe or Bray would not hesitate in such a case to make it very uncomfortable for the Ministry until they were given a place. I cannot do that. I have the power—and, I confess, even the inclination—but what should I think of myself afterwards? No, we need not discuss it. Peebles and Mewbourne are too much men of the world to be diverted from their purpose by such a miserable libel as this."

Jobson—as we have seen—had done the Premier no more than justice; but he did not know, and never was

destined to know, of the consultation that had taken place on the previous night.

His brave words notwithstanding, he was conscious of a feverish excitement. Bertha wanted him to go to see Winnistoun, but on his way he resolved to drop in at the club. There, men were coming and going, as is usual when a Ministry is in course of formation. The hall and reading-room contained some of the lucky ones whose acceptance of office was an accomplished fact. Something in the manner of those who greeted him as he entered the club struck Jobson. They gave him a look, and pressed his hand in a way which seemed significant to a man whose nerves were in a state of tension. This was soon explained by Mr. Humphrey Tarleton.

Mr. Humphrey Tarleton was a busy lounge, idle as a politician, but of incredible energy as a gossip and "good-natured friend." If an unknown relative had left you a fortune, or your mother-in-law had been run over in the street, or a cutting review of your new book had appeared in a periodical, it was Humphrey Tarleton who always managed to be the first to meet you with the news. He no sooner saw Jobson enter the reading-room than he took him by the button.

"Well, old fellow, so they have passed you over this time, after all. D—— shame, I think. I just met Swallow-tail, and he told me Ingledew had accepted the Solicitor-generalship. However, you're a strong fellow, and can afford to wait, I fancy you will take the change out of them—eh? That was a nasty slap at you in the *Post*, and deucedly unfair. I hear, by the way, Bunch is to go to the Colonies. The list is nearly full now. There it is on the board. Very good, don't you think?"

Tarleton was keenly eyeing Jobson's face to see how he bore it, but our hero gave no sign.

"Ingledew is a very good man," he said, "a sound lawyer, and his seat is a safe one."

He turned to the list which was affixed to the board, and, while heart and temples were throbbing with excitement, scanned it with a cool, nonchalant air. Then he slipped quietly out of the club, hailed a cab, and drove to the Temple. It

is impossible to describe what he thought. He could hardly have told anyone himself. He was only conscious of a whirl of ideas, as if his head had received a great blow. Hope seemed to have gone out of his life.

CHAPTER LXVII.

THE IMPROPRIETIES OF INNOCENCE.

THE gratification shown by the Opposition journals and all the various organs of the religious party at the absence of Jobson's name from the Ministerial roll, was like that of a woman who hears that her lover has been jilted by her rival. They regarded it as a victory of the true faith—their critic had been put to confusion. The Bishop of Coverley did not conceal his joy. He told his brother Bromley “that it was a well-deserved rebuff to an erring and overweening pride.” He ventured, alongside this, to express the charitable hope that it would humble that pride and bring the sinner to repentance.

Unhappily, just at this time, a controversy on the famous book had arisen in America, where it had been reprinted by half-a-dozen of the benevolent publishers who there give circulation to the works of English authors, and had been greeted by the public with immense favour. The Americans are of a humorous turn; they are fond of humour of the dry, ironical kind; they are very quick and not bigoted; and they took the book as it was meant—as a good-natured satire. In a country where they joke about everything, from the highest mysteries of religion down to the trial of a vulgar assassin for shooting a President, this book of Jobson's did not strike the religious classes with that shock of “profanity” which in England and Scotland had thrilled through its pious readers. A controversy, however, arose with regard to the exact aim of Jobson's book, between a worthy clergyman of Boston, Mass., of indeterminate views in theology, and a very eminent New York preacher, of the sternest evangelical school. Accordingly, the Rev. Issachar

de la Pryme Bellows, D.D., of Boston, addressed himself to the author, and asked him to say whether by his satire he had not intended to reflect upon those dogmatists "who wrested the Bible to maintain impossible ethics, inconsistent practices, and preposterous superstitions?" Jobson very frankly replied that the Rev. Doctor Issachar de la Pryme Bellows had not so far misapprehended the drift of his satire. This was hammering in the nail up to the head. There wasn't a missionary in India, China, Judea, Zanzibar, or the Sandwich Islands, or a bishop of any creed in England, France, Italy, or Cochin China, who did not feel at once that this critic of the *sanctu sanctorum* was simply an atheist in disguise. A great number of good and true men and women about the world, who had known the pain of the fetters which dogmatic theology and religious bigotry had tightened around the free-born human intellect, sympathised with Jobson. Hence that wonderfully widespread discussion carried on in various languages—sometimes in very bad language—over the views and ideas of the author, which, at the opening of this history, was stated to have given him so extended a notoriety. At the House of Commons, at his club, at his chambers, at his private residence, there poured in daily upon the unfortunate author, the evidences that a great part of the intelligent world was agitated over his opinions; adding thereto an extreme, if not sincere, interest as to his ultimate chances in the great *tombola* of existence. Imagine what was the anxiety of a man whom all the world talked about and watched with the keenest curiosity, when his family and personal affairs were in such a position as those of Jobson. It was indeed no easy thing for his mind to preserve its balance, for his courage to maintain its tone, when every day brought him the proof that so many of the religious and conservative classes had rendered a verdict against him, and were earnestly clamouring for speedy execution. He was the object of a commination prayer in many forms, and languages, to which a vast number of people said "Amen."

But his nature was one that hardened itself, like good steel, under the pressure of adversity. He behaved as if none of these things touched him. No sooner had the

Ministry met the House, and declared its policy, than Jobson was found in his place, vindicating or criticising that policy. Lord Mewbourne, from the peers' gallery, and Mr. Peebles, from the front bench, shook their heads as they listened—as they noted how respectfully the House listened—to these speeches, which were full of power, and absolutely free from venom. It was folly to overlook a man who could express himself with such eloquence, precision, and force. The miserable libel of the *Post* was forgotten a few hours after the first great speech of the member for Linchester, in which his double-edged sword did equal execution in Ministerial and Opposition ranks.

In one place only those venomous paragraphs had struck home with deadly effect. To the Deanery in Coverley they had brought weeping, and lamentation, and bitterness of soul, if not actual gnashing of two sets of very fine teeth. What may be called the *normal* state of Sylvia's feeling towards her husband was that of perfect confidence in his purity and probity. She had admired him as one of the noblest, most ingenuous of characters. His fault, in her eyes, though she would never have admitted it to herself in a concrete form, really was that he was not sufficiently worldly ; for, after all, "common-sense" is worldliness, pure and simple, thrown into the form of principle. But Sylvia Jobson's ideal had been undermined in one place—in regard to the orthodoxy of her husband's religion. That is the most serious foundation of confidence in the eyes of people who build upon the conventional truths of theology all their ethics, all their moralities, all their beliefs, all their hopes in time and for eternity. They cannot conceive that a man who fails there can maintain his moral or religious equilibrium. Wherefore, Sylvia's faith in Jobson received a dreadful shock from Mr. Skirrow's libellous suggestions.

Her mamma rapidly and with characteristic decision adopted the correctness of those libels. So profoundly did they affect her, that she wept, and prayed, and finally took to her bed for several days. And, indeed, gruel, tea, and a feather-bed are not such bad remedies for undue excitement. 'The Dean, generous soul, at his wits' end, deeply moved, wounded to the core of his being, indignant at the vileness

of this attack on his son-in-law, annoyed by the reflection on his family, strove to hold up against the feminine decrees that went forth against Jobson.

"O no! O no!" exclaimed Mrs. Bromley, with a much-abused nose in the pillows. "It is impossible any longer to believe in him; we are everlastingly disgraced. I can never hold my head up again."

Sylvia did not cry, or seek comfort between the sheets, in the soothing down of a feather-bed and the depressive effects of a sick diet. She felt and believed all the more. A man who could be faithless to his God, might very readily forget his duty to his wife. When faith trembled in the balance, dishonesty would soon kick the beam. She said little, but her heart was yet more hardened.

Jobson had cut out the paragraph and sent it down to his father-in-law, with these words:—

MY DEAR DEAN,

An enemy hath done this. It has served its purpose for the moment, but it cannot permanently injure me. My character, I am proud enough to believe, is too well-established to be affected by such vile and absurd imputations as these. I should feel debased in denying them. No one who knows me could credit them. But I *do* feel how they must wound you, and Sylvia, and Mamma Bromley. For this reason—and for this reason only—they pain me. Willingly would I have died to save you all from seeing such things attributed to one whom still, I trust, you all love—as he loves you all. I shall outlive all this. Cheer them all up, my dear Dean. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

Your ever affectionate

THADDÆUS JOBSON.

The Dean's heart was touched, and, without conferring with flesh and blood, he wrote Jobson a long sympathetic letter, repudiating any belief in the scandal, and gently hinting his sorrow at all Jobson's difficulties. "I never cease to pray for you," was the way in which the Dean expressed the deepness and despondency of his feelings. Never ceasing to pray for a person is a tender way of despairing of him.

The *Post* had stirred up to the hottest indignation and sympathy one person who read the lines. One morning Miss Jobson received a visit from Miss Raymond. The young lady, all flushing under her brown skin, and with eyes full of intense fire, hardly waited to pass the customary greetings before she opened her business.

"Miss Jobson!" she cried, taking the lady by both hands—"may I speak to you as a friend? I am sure I may. Do you know, I am pained and distressed about that horrible paragraph about your—your nephew, is he not, or is it your cousin? O you need not laugh. I really didn't know, and I should never have thought it to look at you. But is it not terrible—quite execrable—and of the noblest fellow that ever lived?"

Miss Bertha thought it her duty to look very sober at this warm praise, coming from one almost a stranger to her, and at whom beyond any mistake a part of the malignant paragraph had been directed.

"He is all you say, Miss Raymond," she drily responded.

"And more," said Miss Raymond, with a sagacious nod or the head. "Altogether too good for this world, in my opinion. As far as this abominable paragraph concerns me, I feel nothing, compared with my anger against the wretch who penned it, for his malice against Mr. Jobson. Do you know, he is the only man I ever knew that I should like to have fallen in love with?"

This was said with the most charming candour, and with the speaker's eyes so widely and earnestly open that, although Bertha Jobson felt a repugnance at the sentiment, she could not help smiling at Miss Raymond's frankness.

"O, of course you will be shocked, but you don't know me. I am not afraid to say what I think or feel, especially when my heart tells me there is no evil in it, and God knows the sincerity and purity of my regard for your nephew, Miss Jobson."

And here a big tear rolled down over Miss Raymond's fine, russet cheek, while her eyes never blenched at Bertha's enquiring look.

Bertha took the young lady's hand, and gave it a good squeeze.

"Thank you ! I am sure you would not misunderstand me, and you cannot think how pained I am that his noble conduct in my case should have brought on him these detestable remarks. I would rather have lost all than see him outraged in the way he has been. But it is of no use ; there is nothing to be done, I'm afraid, except to grin and bear it. You don't think he would like to bring an action for libel, do you ? Not if, for instance, someone were to say, 'There are ten thousand pounds to pay the expenses, and were ready to go into the witness-box and swear to every word and every minute of the time passed with him ?'"

Bertha shook her head, half troubled, half amused.

"It is not serious enough for that," she said.

"No one can credit such an idle insinuation, Miss Raymond. Any notice of it would only make things worse."

"Well, Miss Jobson, I will drop that subject, it is horribly disagreeable. I really don't know where to put my head, I am so mortified and wounded. But there were other things hinted at in that odious paper. Now, I don't want to ask anything indiscreet, or to pry into family secrets, but they say something about Mr. Jobson having lost a lot of money. Will you forgive me ? I don't know how to put it—and it must seem strange to you that I should ask such a question. But—is—is it true ?"

"It is not much of a secret, Miss Raymond," replied Miss Jobson, with dignity, "though, of course, we should wish it talked about as little as possible. My nephew did enter into an unfortunate speculation, wherein, without any fault of his own, he lost a great part of the fortune received from his uncle, but fortunately his father is in a good position, and I am tolerably well situated, and it is not likely that either of us would allow our dear relative to suffer any inconvenience on that score."

Miss Jobson's tone had become a little dry again.

"Please don't be angry with me, dear Miss Jobson, but you know I have heaps of money—more than I know what to do with. He would not touch it if I offered it to him, I know, and I daren't do it, for he would never speak to me again ; but now, my dear Miss Jobson, let me place at your

disposal ten or fifteen or twenty thousand pounds ; it will leave me far more than ever I want, a solitary woman like me, and you can manage to help him without breathing a word, he will never know were it came from, and you need not rob yourself. Let me do it ; I should feel so happy if I could do anything to relieve him from anxiety."

Again there were drops on Miss Raymond's cheeks as she put her hands together, and pleaded by her attitude and tone and words for the privilege of helping Jobson. It would have made the ears of Sylvia and her mamma tingle if they had heard of it, as fortunately they never did.

Bertha's eyes responded. Whatever there might be of strange and objectionable in her visitor's enthusiasm, it was not possible to resist the conviction of its perfect purity of intention and its naïve generosity. It touched her heart. She got up and kissed Miss Raymond, who returned the embrace with a feverish emphasis. But Miss Jobson did not let her feelings overpower her judgment.

"This is very noble and generous of you, Florence Raymond," she said, "but, my dear it is impossible for us to listen to such a proposal. I assure you we have all we want—everything is arranged. I should be lost in Taddy's good graces for ever were I to yield to your desires. For a man like him this is only a temporary check ; he will face it bravely, and he will soon recover himself. Besides, my dear, consider, were anyone to hear of it—and I don't see how you could possibly conceal it—it would only make the gossip ten times worse."

"Oh !" cried Miss Raymond, "I have arranged all that. No one in the world would know of it. See"—producing an envelope—"I have put in here twenty bank-notes. I could leave them on your table, and not a soul in the world would know of it but you and me."

Bertha could not help laughing as she put back the little hand, elegantly gloved in black, which held out the white envelope.

"How absurd you are, my dear. How in the world did you get so much money in a lump ? You need looking after ! Your friends and bankers will be sure to want to know what you have done with such an immense sum.

Please put it in your pocket and think no more about it. I cannot tell you how deeply I feel your kindness. Believe me, I shall never, never forget it." And she kissed her visitor again.

"Well," said the other, slipping the precious envelope into her muff, "at least promise me one thing. If at any time you *should* find that anything happens, and your resources are not sufficient to meet the difficulty, you will come to me, won't you? You cannot refuse that?"

"If I should find," said Bertha Jobson slowly, "that our united resources are not enough to save Taddy Jobson from an overwhelming disaster, I promise you that I will come to you, Miss Raymond; but I trust, by God's help, that time will never come, and I earnestly beseech you to think of some better way of using your money. Still I am your debtor. You must love him almost as well as we do to act as you have done."

"I respect and esteem him very much," said Miss Raymond shyly, "as all must do who know him. For *love*—Miss Jobson, what is it? I know nothing of it—and you know the world would regard it as criminal, were I to avow ever so innocent a flash of it." She changed the subject abruptly. "The money will remain at my bankers'," added the determined young lady, "until it is wanted, or at least until I am certain it will not be required."

She showed her fine white teeth between the full ruby lips, and her face mantled again with a rich colour. Bertha, seeing that she could not turn Miss Raymond from her intention, said no more. She could not, however, restrain a wish that arose in her mind, that the generous lady had been some thirty or forty years older at least. She almost trembled at the idea that this move of the impulsive girl, if known, would add fuel to a fire already sufficiently fierce. Then her thoughts turned upon the fine, generous, but too impulsive woman before her, with whose history she had hitherto been more familiar than with her character, and who seemed so sadly in want of the guidance of a sober and thoughtful friendship.

"Miss Raymond," she said gently, "may I not call you Florence?—perhaps I may yet be able to prove to you,

in something more than words, how gratefully I appreciate your kind action of to-day. I think—if I have heard your history correctly from Taddy Jobson—I expect I have—you may need some sisterly friend to counsel and help you. My knowledge of the world is very indifferent, and I am only a sober old maid, but it would be the most real pleasure to me to know better one who has shown that she possesses so good a heart, and to whom I am now under such a deep obligation. It is fitter for you to have a friend like that than to go for advice to the soberest of young gentlemen! Will you allow me to try and fill, for the present at all events, the vacant place? My heart is not so largely occupied that it cannot find room for one more pure and pleasant friendship."

Nothing could be more charming than Bertha's dignity, and tact, and sweetness of manner as she uttered these words. Florence Raymond's only response was to throw her arms round Bertha's neck and have a delightful cry, while the precious package of banknotes went skimming along the carpet. So far was she relieved by this operation that she picked up her rejected treasure with a hearty laugh, and the two ladies were able to cement the new alliance in a natural way, over a wholesome lunch.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

A FINE POINT IN CASUISTRY.

THE season was in full swing, and society, which had gossiped a little over Jobson's misfortunes, domestic and foreign, had long since seized upon other objects for its mordant malice. Everyone was in town—everyone of any social or political pretensions was whirling about in the wild dance of political intrigue and frivolous amusement which sets in with Parliament and ends before its work is finished. Few who met Jobson ever thought of the idle things that had been said against him. He worked hard, spent most of his time in the House, and, from a natural and needful delicacy, scarcely appeared at any of the great routs, excepting those which were official, or to which Bertha insisted on accompanying him. It was a life in which it was impossible to be happy, and wherein the only specific against absolute misery and prostration of spirit, was activity of mind. His intense longing to see his children moved his aunt to write to the Deanery and beg that they might come up to town for a short visit to her house.

Sylvia's letter was prompt, and charged with lightning. As a historian, I produce it; for it is foolish to hide from ourselves the peculiarities of that strange organisation we call humanity, when we know that its better side—the favourite theme of the optimists, who are a large and healthy minority—is the one which is least rarely turned up to the light. One would prefer much to burn the letter and consign it to oblivion, were that indeed possible of things which have once been transcribed on the eternal scroll of existence, and stand recorded for some tremendous scrutiny when the Encyclopædia of Humanity shall have reached its awful "FINIS."

"Months have elapsed, madam, since he who, through you, as I presume, desires to see and caress his children, in the absence of the wife whom he has wounded, and *some say*—God only knows—*wronged*, has allowed to pass, without the slightest attempt at explanation or denial, *public imputations* which, if they have *the smallest atom of foundation*, render him unworthy of the affection of a true wife or innocent children. The privileges of a father ought only to be granted to him who acts as one and is worthy of them. *He* is unworthy of them so long as, either from a wicked pride or for a worse reason, he treats their mother as an enemy and a stranger. I regret, madam, that I can send you no other answer."

The letter, in the firmness of the handwriting and the deepness and sharpness of the under-scoring of its emphatic words, showed that it was written by an implacable hand. It made poor Bertha shiver all over. She was terrified by the hardness of this woman, and frightened to think what would happen were Jobson to see these lines. Still more alarmed was she at their effect on her own mind. Her whole being rose passionately and fiercely against the writer, with a flood of animosity so foreign to her nature that she felt herself injured by it.

"O God!" she cried, as she wrung her hands in tearless anguish, "wilt Thou not judge between this woman and my poor, noble, innocent boy?"

There was no time to be lost. Jobson was expecting an answer. She posted off at once, in the early morning, to Winnistoun's chambers, who, when he saw her enter, and looked at her face, shook with fear.

"For heaven's sake, Bertha Jobson," he said, as she sank breathless and nearly fainting on a chair, "speak! Is he——?" He could not finish.

She held out the letter.

Never had the grand lines of his face shown such a terrible emotion as they did while his eyes rapidly glanced over the contents.

"Has he seen it?"

"No."

"He must *not*—not for all the world. She is dreadful!"

"What are we to do? He will be there—now perhaps—to see her reply."

Winnistoun clenched his hand on his forehead. So few minutes to think, and so dreadful a responsibility hanging on their thoughts!

Their eyes met. The same idea had flashed through their brains.

"He *must* not know," said Winnistoun, averting his eyes.

"He shall *never* read it," said Bertha in a low voice.

"If you tell him you have had a letter," said Winnistoun slowly, thinking aloud, "he will want to know what she said; then, when he hears she refuses, he will want to see the letter; and then you will be forced to show it to him. He may be strong enough to stand it, though I have my fears; but, after that, every hope of reconciliation is gone."

"Yes."

"You must say you have no reply!" said Winnistoun, rapidly and desperately, and then he looked at Bertha Jobson with a frightened air, to see how she would take it. Then he went to the mantel-shelf, struck a match, lit the paper, held it in his fingers till it was nearly consumed, and threw it into the grate.

She covered her face in her hands—it was red with shame.

A deep silence ensued.

"William Winnistoun," at length said a voice changed and broken, from between the small fingers, "you are stronger than I. You are too good and noble to tell me to do that which before God and our consciences is wrong. Think well—do you advise me to tell Taddy Jobson that I have received no answer from his wife?"

"In the sight of God, who judgeth all hearts, but *who* judgeth not as men judge—who knoweth the motive of our action, I, William Winnistoun, take upon me the whole responsibility of this which I now advise. If there be *guilt*, the guilt be mine."

Bertha heaved a deep sigh. "And mine too, William, for henceforth we are one." And she rose and put her hand in his.

He pressed it silently and put it to his lips. No more. To them for the moment the embraces of love were frivolities.

"Quick home, Bertha!" cried Winnistoun. And he led her to the carriage. "Be firm, my love, my own," he whispered, as he closed the door.

She was at home long before Jobson arrived. Her woman's wit had not been inactive on the way. It was not yet half-past nine o'clock—her nephew's breakfast hour during the Parliamentary season.

He was a little late this morning. A three-cornered note lay on his table:

"DEAREST TADDY—I ought to have received a favourable answer from the Deanery this morning. Do you think it possible that *she* does not mean to answer? that she could refuse so reasonable a request? Ought I to write again more strongly, or what do you think ought to be done? Shall I see you on your way to the Temple?"

"Do you know, darling Taddy, what I have done? You won't be angry with your old aunt, will you, and think her a very ridiculous person? Well, I think we want another strong head in the family, and I have consented to become

"*Bertha Winnistoun!*"

Who would have thought Bertha capable of such a masterly piece of diplomacy (properly pronounced *dup-licity*)? She was getting sadly demoralised by her intercourse with that refined rogue, Winnistoun. That which might naturally have been anticipated from so clever an epistle happened. Jobson's heart, which had fallen at the suggestive disappointment of the first paragraph, rose and thrilled again with delight at the second. He rushed over to Arlington Street, folded Bertha, blushing and trembling at her own audacity, in his arms, congratulated her ironically on having at length, however late in the day, corrected one of the grand mistakes of her life; told her with a moody look "not to write *down there* again; we must be very patient, it is our last hope," and went off to shout his congratulations to Winnistoun, prepared for his appearance by that sly aunt, who had consented at one and the same time to delude a nephew and accept a husband—and all for love.

When Winnistoun came up in the afternoon, he found Bertha, prostrated and troubled, lying on the sofa in her boudoir in a state of feverish excitement, her mind working violently to reconcile the part she had played with the *dicta* of a peculiarly earnest and ingenuous conscience. She had not yet settled it with the little monitor quite to her own satisfaction. Why? For Taddy would she not willingly have died? and the slight evasion by which she had happily distracted his mind from a terrible crisis, she could justify to herself. But had she also engaged herself to go to the extreme and deny a fact? And, had the occasion arisen, would she not have done it? She was not the woman to seek to avoid the responsibility even of an intention. Yet on the whole she felt satisfied that Winnistoun was right. From what they knew of Jobson's state of mind, which it was indeed difficult to penetrate, a sight of that fearful letter might have killed him—would, beyond all recall, have severed the last ties which bound him to Sylvia; would have left him with the fearful burden of separation and isolation to carry all his life; would have necessitated a public scandal, in the effort to assert his rights over his children. This, however, was not all that troubled Miss Jobson. In a moment of exaltation, the very memory of which thrilled in her heart with a delicious pleasure, she had suddenly ruptured that self-imposed bond—the promise, the declaration, whatever it might be termed—to Lord Swallowtail. Was this right or wrong?

No one but herself and the noble wooer who, a few weeks after, had transferred his affections elsewhere, knew of it. Now she roused herself, and told the simple story to Winnistoun. He listened and he understood. He could hardly be called an impartial adviser! but he could be trusted to be sincere.

"Will you rest content with my solemn opinion," he said, "that, in face of all argument, that which we proposed to do this morning, and that which we have done—is right? So far as Swallowtail is concerned," he added, "if your words could by any refinement of casuistry be twisted into the form of a promise to him, you were freed from it by his subsequent conduct. If that is all that has been standing

between us and happiness all these years, my dear Bertha, it was a shadow, a mere partition of tissue-paper, which could be broken through in a moment by simply passing our hands through it. Was there anything more in it? That is what is troubling you. Was it a sort of vow registered in your own mind, for some good reason, and which your conscience felt constrained to keep? Was it a solemn promise to God which He could justly demand that you should fulfil? In my judgment it was neither. It had in it no motive of pious sacrifice which could be reclaimed against you by the Deity; and, as far as you yourself are concerned, it was not a vow made to yourself to refrain from something evil or inadvisable. What then is left? Half a dozen words which signify nothing."

"You are a dreadful casuist, William," she said, laying her head on his breast, "you have become my confessor. I think if *you* grant me absolution, my conscience may be clear."

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE CRISIS.

JUNE, with its brightness of life and fulness of growth, its skies of azure, its clouds of ærial silver—white opaque wings of angels, gently flitting across the cerulean depths: its sun beaming upon the world with a fineness and volatility of heat, inspiring in all animal life the purest ecstasies of being: its genial atmosphere enfolding the tenderest atoms of existence with a soft, glowing, nurturing duvet; June, which restores Paradise to all the dwellers in the broad, beautiful country; where, afar from the din and smoke of towns, the green growing blades of wheat and the flowery tops of the rich clover, move in exquisite symphony under the light-fingered touch of an Æolian breeze, and man and beast feel that a strong effluence of life comes up exhilarant from teeming soil—exhales from leafy tree and copse and flowery meadow and running brook and sleepy, lotus-starred pool; the holiday of Nature, wherein, nevertheless, she does her most wondrous work—the climax in an ever-recurring creation, when God can look round and say all is good—when the year is still in her teens, and, in the glow and pleasure of blooming life, has not yet begun to think of the withering, and palsy, and chill, and death of the coming time. Its Eden-balm and elixir penetrate the smoky canopies of the great city; its golden air envelops the vast dingy buildings with a luminous haze; invades with a joyous radiance the gloomiest chambers, gladdens with vital warmth the most dismal dens; calls out the pale-faced millions to rejoice in the glow of universal light and life, transfuses everywhere the influences of hope and joy.

“Everywhere?”

Here is a pallid man who, amid all this life, this movement of men and Nature, this exhilarating purity of air and vitality of heat, carries a heart as chill as the snows of winter. Out there, on the edge of the cathedral city, amid the almost tropical luxuriance and beauty of the cultured vegetation, the fragrance of the honeysuckle, the golden hum of bees, and never-weary song of fluttering choirs, a woman walks with a heart that resists the genial transports of the hour.

An ancient saw but ever true :—*Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.* The human heart makes its own climate. But not long can it remain the same. Winter and summer, it too must have its cyclones, its typhoons, its Doldrum calms, its multitudinous changes of temperature and movement. It is a law of life. And for these two hearts the hour of change was come. The barometer was descending with fatal rapidity. The clouds were gathering, and they were rising in the direction of Tom Skirrow.

One day in this June time, when the soft languor of the air had tempted Jobson to walk through the Green Park, he became conscious, as he stalked along moody, swinging his stick, that there was walking before him, somewhat briskly, a woman, rather over-dressed for the hour, but still with a certain elegance, and though he could not see her face, there was something about her figure and carriage which struck him as familiar. In two or three strides he was up with her, and about to pass, when, glancing over her shoulder at the sound of footsteps, with a bold coquetry which would at once have shown that she was not of the higher type of women, she gave a little cry,

“Mr. Jobson!”

He stopped surprised, and under the broad hat, in the rouged cheeks, the mouth and chin, which had become fuller and more sensual, the sparkling eyes, around which, however, a baneful art had been trying to conceal the ravages of time, he recognised Emily Skirrow.

“Are you not Mrs. Skirrow?” he enquired, annoyed and puzzled that she should have ventured to accost him.

“Yes—please forgive me. I don’t want to annoy you—

I know it is not pleasant for you to speak to me ; but I was at this moment on my way to your chambers to leave this letter."

She handed him a note.

"May I enquire," said Jobson, his heart throbbing with anxiety, as he remembered how fatal to him had been the epistles which he had received from the same hand, although so kindly meant. "May I enquire what is the subject of this communication?"

"Forgive me, Mr. Jobson, I must not be seen speaking to you. It is dangerous for both of us, and your enemies are numerous. The letter contains very bad news. Don't open it till you get to your office. I only hope it may be of some use to you. Unfortunately I can never get hold of the intelligence until it is almost too late. I may rely on you to use it discreetly. I could not send it by Mrs. Timpany, she is ill, so I brought it myself at great risk. I owe you this reparation ; will you please shake hands with me ? Good-bye !"

She turned and went off, leaving Jobson standing there stupefied, with the letter in his hand. And that was the woman he once had loved ; for whom he had translated odes and written verses, and poured out all the pure stream of feeling of a young and strong and joyous life. His eye of a man of the world had read a sad story of passion and sorrow and evil, in the face, the voice, the look, the manner, the dress of the woman who was rapidly disappearing. He was brought to his senses by a little dog, which ran and barked at the letter in his hand. He held it a moment irresolutely, as if tempted to open it, but re-advised, he put it in his pocket, and began walking with greater energy toward his chambers. The incident had filled his mind with gloomy apprehensions of evil. Emily Skirrow seemed to be the kindly but repulsive bird that always appeared, with an ominous croak, to give warning of misfortune. And what was it ? Something evidently in which Tom Skirrow was concerned. Coxon again ? Some new scandal in the Armathwaite case ? Some fresh abomination about Helena ? He racked his mind in imagining every possible form of misfortune that could come upon him from that quarter.

He arrived at length at Pump Court, and, nodding to Timpany, who saw something in his master's face which was strange and alarming, he entered his room and locked the door.

His hand trembled as he tore open the letter. At a glance he took in its meaning, and, staggering, dropped into a chair, his eyes starting, his fists convulsively clenched, the blood gone from his cheek. It was a stroke of the lightning of misfortune.

"It seems as if I were destined to send you bad news. To-night, I found papers in T.'s pocket. Moses and Moses hold further bills of Coxon & Co., given by C. just before he left, at 6 months, and due in two or three days. They are for nineteen thousand five hundred pounds. Half of it is 'accrued interest,' the paper says, on old debts, at 50 to 60 per cent. This is all I know.

"E. S."

He held his head in his hands. The blow was heavy indeed. Was this money really owing, and if not who was to show the contrary? The ruin was complete. Phantoms of possibilities danced round dreadful, in the dark ring within which he seemed to sit hopeless. There was no longer a reactive energy in the proud, brave spirit. Nor was there anything to fall back upon. Bertha's fortune was only settled on her for life, with remainder to his children. She had already heavily mortgaged her interest to help him; he could not think of allowing her to sacrifice herself further. "Bankruptcy"—word of terror and of shame! But for him it was absolutely inevitable—that, and all that it involved. In such crises of life, when a tremendous storm of misfortune breaks over the soul, strange, wild, foolish things often come floating through the brain, like flakes of moss or paper through a whirlwind; and Jobson found, at this moment, current amidst the serious thoughts of the hour, the words of the Latin exercise, familiar to distressed schoolboys, "Balbus says that it is all over with the army." He would have smiled, had it been possible to smile, at the preposterous involuntary repetition of this opinion of the veteran whose tiresome persistence of statement had been the bane of many a boyish hour.

Temples throbbing—a heart sinking with the agony of defeat—hope slain, and not to be revived—ambition checked, broken-winged, dashed to earth! This, happening to the shrewd adventurer, the daring speculator, the political gamester, the hardened spendthrift, might be taken with a shrug of the shoulders or a sickly tear, a curse, or a shout of forced laughter; but for the man of noble impulse, high honour, a clear conscience, is the very anguish and bitterness and darkness of death.

The hours passed unwittingly to Jobson, striving to realise his situation, to familiarise himself with the dreadful fact that there was no escape. Ay! to all the miserable bogeys conjured up by malicious enmity against an honourable man was to be added this reality—insolvency, the death of credit, the taint of honour—no matter that it came not by his fault.

Political career cut short, literary height and renown snapped off, professional prospects damned, social position gone; exclusion from Parliament, pillorying in the press, posting at his club—everything that sensitive pride abhors, fears, shrinks from—all this was before the eyes and in the mind of the stricken man. When he tried to brace his forces and rise against it, he fell back as a beaten eagle before a tornado; with all his grand sweep of wing he could not bear up against a calamity so overpowering as this one. “Balbus says that it is all over with the army. Balbus, Balbus——” Even an idiot like Balbus may discern the hopelessness of defeat.

Lay down your arms; capitulate, vanquished one; with hanging head, own at length, proud soul, that all is over. *Vis major* is beaten by the lesser and the viler powers.

Only Shakespeare knew how to describe such a situation:

. . . . Then, being alone,

Left and abandoned of his velvet friends:
“’Tis right,” quoth he: “thus misery doth part
The flux of company.” Anon, a careless herd,
Full of the pasture, jumps along by him,
And never stays to greet him. “Ay,” quoth Jaques,
“Sweep on, you fat and greasy citizens;
’Tis just the fashion: wherefore do you look
Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there?”

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Alarmed by the long silence of his master, Timpany knocked at the door, and made an excuse to fetch a book. Jobson's face frightened his clerk. He saw in it a pallor so extreme—a pain so intense. But, at the interruption, the gallant mind made an effort and roused itself.

"Timpany," he said, firmly, "I want you to go over to Harcourts & Dean's, and ask Mr. Samuel Harcourt to do me the favour to step over here on urgent and important business. Please be particular to give my words."

Harcourts & Dean were well-known solicitors in bankruptcy. He had made up his mind, this time, to advise with no one who was dear to him. He knew they would all make frantic efforts to save him, and he would not suffer it.

The instructions to the lawyer, who was soon closeted with him, were few and simple. He was to call on the attorneys who had possession of the bills, and satisfy himself that these were genuine, and unless he should discover some good ground to sustain a defence of fraud or forgery, he was to give notice that the bills would not be paid and that Jobson would become bankrupt. The lawyer was to move at once, and if possible return a reply within an hour.

Mr. Harcourt was astonished at his client's calmness and clearness. He knew how tremendous a blow this was to the prospects and ambitions of the powerful man before him. Yet Jobson exposed his position with a neatness and precision of language such as even he, a master of words, had never surpassed. In the bloodless face and firm lips, almost white with emotion, there was written a quiet resolution which evoked the inward admiration of the man of parchment and formalities. Before the dignity of Jobson's grief, his adviser was silent with a respect greater than he would have shown to the same man in a distinguished position, a high office, with an unassailable repute. Once only he ventured a suggestion.

"Your friends, Mr. Jobson——"

"—Are not to hear one word of this, Mr. Harcourt. They could only aid me by ruining themselves. So soon as you have decided upon our course I will acquaint them with the facts."

Mr. Harcourt took his leave. Words of comfort rose to his lips, but he would have been a bold man who gave them utterance before that proud and determined face.

In an hour Jobson knew his fate. The papers were in order. No compromise would be listened to. In the absence of Coxon, the solicitor could not advise the raising of any defence.

Thus it was that, as this history began with relating, Jobson, its hero, "went down" on the twenty-fifth of June one thousand eight hundred and fifty. On that day, it was known to all the world that a brave, bold, able, ambitious man had struck his colours to misfortune. He was suffering, shut up in his house. The world was gossiping about it, in its clubs and at its dinner-parties, shrugging its shoulders and pitying him—this last its most refined form of cruelty. The newspaper writers were moralising over it. Bertha was weeping. Sylvia's mortification and resentment reached the climax.

Only a week later, the breathless telegraph messenger, jangling the bell at the Deanery, pitched a yellow envelope, like a fire-cracker, into the gloomy and obdurate repose which reigned there. Jobson had had a hæmorrhage. The doctor gave little hope. He had asked to see his wife. Bertha's telegram was as dry as a historical note. She had made Winnistoun pen it.

The message dropped from Sylvia's hand. She became cold and pale with a sudden remorse. As with a flash all her conduct stood out before her—all the former lights altered to shade, all the shadows changed to lights. She could see a pallid figure, a crimson tide of life flowing from the lips—the beautiful mouth that had kissed her so often—the lips that had dropped music into her ears in words of love, of eloquent passion, of noble and manly feeling, crimson-stained now with the outgoing flood of a precious life.

Dying, perhaps dead! and other faces were around him, other hands performing the last dear offices of loving friendship—and she, alas! his wife—his enemy so long—was absent! The poor Dean wept like a child and wrung his hands. Had he met the Bishop then, I fear he would have spoken unadvisedly with his lips. Mrs.

Bromley, a struggle going on in her heart, hastily packed a few things for the melancholy journey.

* * * * *

Jobson, lying half-unconscious, propped up by soft pillows, was watched by the anxious physician, by Bertha and Winnistoun. In the corner a weeping woman, who had prayed to be allowed to enter to take a last look at him, stood, gazing through her tears, her hand clenched on her lips. He opened his eyes, and a smile and flash of light came over his face. The doctor, with an almost imperceptible sign, retired from the bedside.

Jobson looked round, and his lips moved.

"*Sylvia ?*"

"We are expecting her every minute."

"Thank God ! Oh, my poor mother !"

"You must not speak, dear."

He gazed astonished at the figure in the corner. It came forward. He held out his white hand ; she pressed it to her lips. It was Florence Raymond. She glanced at Bertha.

"May I say it ?"

"Dear friend," said the brave girl, in a low musical voice, "be hopeful. Everything is wiped out. All the debts are paid. There is nothing anyone can say against you now."

He placed his hand on his heart. Only his eyes spoke—eloquently, gratefully, but sadly—to her. She understood him ; and, seeing something in his face, she returned to the corner and knelt down. He took the hands of Winnistoun and Bertha, and, joining them together across the bed, he held them in his own. For an instant, the three loving hearts throbbed together ; and then suddenly two became conscious that the third had ceased to beat for ever.

Before the three silent figures could change their posture, the door opened hurriedly, and a pale-faced woman appeared on the threshold. She cast a single glance at the bed, staggered forward a step or two, and, with a half-stifled cry, "*Too late !*" fell heavily on the floor.

It was on the bosom of Bertha that her head was pillowed, it was by the hands of Florence Raymond that the remedies ordered by the doctor were being applied, when the widow of Thaddæus Jobson opened her eyes upon a grief for which there was no solace.

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